

Workplace benefits and flexibility: A perspective on parents' experiences

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CANADIAN NATIONAL CHILD CARE STUDY



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CANADIAN NATIONAL CHILD CARE STUDY

WORKPLACE BENEFITS AND FLEXIBILITY: A PERSPECTIVE ON PARENTS' EXPERIENCES

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THE CANADIAN NATIONAL CHILD CARE STUDY

The Canadian National Child Care Study is a collaborative research project involving four academic researchers affiliated with the National Day Care Research Network and Statistics Canada's Special Surveys Group, Household Surveys Division. The study was funded by Human Resources Development through its Child Care Initiatives Fund and by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Additional funding was provided by the governments of Ontario and New Brunswick. The study consists of two linked, but separate research projects: a comprehensive national survey of Canadian families with at least one child under age 13, and a history and review of child care in each province and territory. The latter is contained in the publication, **Canadian child care in context: Perspectives from the provinces and territories**.

This report is one of a series based on the 1988 National Child Care Survey. It focuses on the relationship between parents' work lives and child care. Other reports focus on children and their care arrangements, Canadian families and their child care arrangements, and specific thematic issues such as the affordability and availability of child care in Canada. A separate report is available that provides an overview of the Canadian National Child Care Study, including its goals and objectives, and detailed information about methodology and procedures. Readers requiring additional information may contact any of the following persons:



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HIGHLIGHTS

Data on the availability of family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements were collected through the 1988 National Child Care Survey from a nationally representative sample of employed parents with one or more children under 13 years of age. When weighted to represent the general population, the data presented in this report pertain to the approximately 1.4 million parents in Canada who worked for pay outside the home in the fall of 1988 while assuming primary responsibility in their families for arranging child care. Of such parents, approximately 94% were women; 81% were part of a dual-earner couple; 14% were lone parents; and 5% were sole earners with a spouse who was unemployed or not in the labour force.

This report focuses on parents' perceptions of the availability of family-supportive workplace arrangements; their experiences in balancing paid work and family commitments; and their preferences for changes in the workplace that would help them harmonize work and family life.

This report should interest policy makers, employers, human resource managers, and those who care about the quality of family life and work-family issues. Some of the many interesting findings from this study are presented next.

- Most parents who worked for pay outside the home and had the primary responsibility for arranging child care carried a heavy load.
 - 73% were employed full time.
 - 49% had two or more children under age 13.
 - 53% had at least one child under age 6 and 14% had two or more children younger than 6 years old.
 - 31% had one or more children under age 3, while one in five had a child less than 18 months old.
- In 1988, Canadian parents generally lacked access to many workplace benefits and arrangements that might have helped them balance work and family responsibilities. The most commonly available benefits and arrangements were extended (unpaid) maternity leave and the opportunity to work part time -- each was available to 53% of parents with primary responsibility for child care.
 - 32% of such parents could work flexible hours.
 - 24% had employers who permitted job-sharing.
 - 23% could take paid family responsibility leave if their children were sick or if their regular child care arrangements fell through.
 - 12% had employers who provided funds to "top-up" Unemployment Insurance maternity leave benefits.
 - 6% had employers who provided workplace child care facilities.

- In general, access to (or awareness of) family-supportive workplace arrangements was unrelated to the extent to which parents were shouldering heavy child-rearing demands. As a result:
 - Nearly two-thirds of parents with three or more children had no flexibility in their hours of work.
 - More than three-quarters of parents with preschool-aged children had no access to paid short-term leave when their children were sick or when child care arrangements fell through.
 - Single parents were considerably less likely than other parents to be able to reduce their work hours to part time.
- Access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements was related to parents' employment characteristics. Access differed between full- and part-time workers, private and public sector workers, and those who had more specialized job skills or more senior positions compared to those in semi-skilled or unskilled occupations.
 - Parents employed part time were more likely to be able to work flexible hours than those employed full time, but less likely to have access to paid leave.
 - Parents employed in the public sector (approximately 26% of the population represented) were more likely to have generous leave provisions than those in the private sector, but less likely to be able to work flexible hours.
 - Highly specialized employees (professionals, semi-professionals and technicians) were more likely to report access to part-time work or job-sharing options than any other type of employee. Senior and middle managers, meanwhile, were most likely to have access to flexible work schedules and to paid family responsibility leave.
 - Parents with jobs requiring fewer skills (particularly those employed in services, manufacturing, and sales) appeared, in many cases, to have jobs that traded access to paid benefits (such as family responsibility leave or a "top-up" of UI maternity leave benefits) for the opportunity to work part time or to work more flexible hours.
- Of parents who worked for pay outside the home while assuming primary responsibility for arranging child care, 89% said they experienced at least some tension on a day-to-day basis from juggling work and family responsibilities. Roughly 38% said they experienced moderate amounts of work-family tension, while 19% said they experienced a great deal of work-family tension on a daily basis.
- Parents were most likely to attribute tension to "role overload" (feeling tired and overloaded) and to the difficulty of maintaining a balance between work and family responsibilities. Almost two-thirds of employed parents with primary responsibility for child care reported moderate or severe tension related to these two factors. Other factors causing significant amounts of tension included the total number of hours parents worked, their work schedules, managing the cost of high quality child care, and concerns about children's safety and well-being while the parents were at work.
- When asked to indicate their preferred employment status considering their own needs and those of their family, the parents surveyed indicated a clear preference for part-time work. While 75% of parents with primary

responsibility for child care were employed full time, only 34% of all parents surveyed said that full-time employment was the most desirable option for them: 53% preferred part-time employment, while 13% preferred not to be employed. Of parents with primary responsibility for child care who were employed full time and relied on non-parental child care arrangements, only 42% preferred full-time employment. Least likely to prefer full-time employment were those with one or more children under age 3.

- Of parents who relied on non-parental child care arrangements while at work, 39% said they wanted to change their work schedules. Parents who worked non-standard shifts (fixed late day, night, or irregular shifts) were most likely to want to change their work schedules. Of those who wanted to change work schedules, many said that working only during school hours would be desirable.
- When asked to identify one child-related benefit that would best support them as parents, nearly 70% of parents said that a change in workplace policy or practices would help them better balance work and family responsibilities. The two most popular family-supportive arrangements preferred by parents were workplace child care facilities (23%) and flexible work hours (19%). Parents of younger children (less than 3 years of age) were more likely to prefer workplace child care, while parents of older children (6 to 12 years of age) were most likely to prefer flexible work hours.





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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Today, many parents must deal with work-family conflict, which often occurs when parents struggle to balance work and family responsibilities in circumstances that afford them limited flexibility and support. Increasingly, the issue of work-family conflict is being recognized by policy makers, employers, human resource professionals and the public as a significant factor affecting both productivity in the workplace and the well-being of individuals and families. Changes in the composition of Canada's labour force -- especially the influx of women -- have resulted in increasing numbers of workers who must manage responsibilities both as employees and as caregivers for dependent family members.

Consequently, employers and public policy makers are showing increased interest in strategies that may alleviate the strains associated with balancing work and family life. "Family-friendly" benefits and practices, such as flextime, family-related leave, and workplace child care facilities, may help employees balance their paid work and family responsibilities more effectively. In addition, such options ensure that workers with dependent family members enjoy the same employment opportunities as workers without dependents.

To date, there has been little research on the availability of family-supportive workplace practices and on the needs and preferences of workers with family responsibilities. This lack of information may be hindering employers and public policy makers in their efforts to assist workers with primary child care responsibilities. In particular, more information about the needs and employment characteristics of such parents is required in the Canadian context.

The four main objectives of this report are:

- To provide estimates of the proportion of parents in Canada with access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements such as workplace day care, paid family responsibility leave, job sharing or part-time work, and flexibility in work hours;
- To determine which factors influence parents' access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements;
- To present parents' assessments of the general level of tension they experience in juggling work, family, and child care responsibilities, and to identify which factors cause the most tension for parents of younger and older children; and
- To provide parents' responses when asked about their preferred work status, their interest in changing their work schedules, and the family-supportive work arrangements that would best support them in managing work, family, and child care responsibilities.

The information in this report is based on data collected through the 1988 National Child Care Survey from a nationally representative sample of employed parents with one or more children under 13 years of age. Expressed as weighted population estimates, the data represent the approximately 1.4 million parents in Canada who worked for pay outside the home in the fall of 1988 while assuming primary responsibility for arranging child care.¹ The information in this report will be of interest to a wide audience, and should be particularly useful to those interested in developing work-family policies and evaluating changes in the workplace resulting from new legislation, incentive programs, and employer initiatives.

Strengths and Limitations of This Study

Readers should be aware of the strengths and limitations of this study. One major strength is that the research is based on a nationally representative sample of parents from across Canada (except the Yukon and Northwest Territories). In contrast, most studies of work and family issues are based on the responses of employees in selected companies (which often exclude small businesses) or surveys of employers.

A second strength is that the data were collected as a supplement to Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Hence, all information on parents' employment status, occupation, industry classification, and other employment characteristics is based on standard questions and response codes. This will facilitate comparisons with future studies using standard LFS procedures.

A limitation of this study is that the data were collected prior to the protracted recession Canada experienced in the early 1990s. The recession has had sobering effects on unemployment rates, especially in goods-producing industries. Between 1990 and the end of 1992, approximately 458,000 full-time jobs were lost across all industries, while part-time jobs increased by 127,000.²

Annual average labour force participation rates decreased by 1.3% for men aged 25 to 44 between 1988 and 1991, while increasing by 2.3% for women in the same age group.³ Indeed, the number of women in the labour force with preschool-aged children (under age 6) continued to increase throughout this period, with little change in the proportion of such mothers employed on a full-time basis (roughly 68%).⁴ Given the down-sizing and layoffs that occurred, it is fair to surmise that the economic insecurities and logistical stresses of managing work and family responsibilities have not diminished, and may be more pronounced now than in 1988.

For these reasons and others, employers, human resource managers, and policy makers may be more receptive to part-time and flexible work arrangements that may enhance workers' productivity and morale, decrease rates of absenteeism and burnout, and reduce work-family conflict for workers with dependent children or elderly family members. It is hoped that the findings presented in this report will help inform those considering the implementation of such work arrangements.

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND: WOMEN IN THE WORK FORCE AND CHANGING FAMILY PATTERNS

2.1 Implications for Families

Influenced largely by major declines in the birth rate since the 1960s, the growth rate of Canada's labour force source population (the population aged 15 years and over) continues to decline.⁵ As the pool of traditional labour force entrants declines, women's labour force participation has risen. Labour market demand, however, is only one of many factors contributing to women's increasing labour force participation. Other factors include increasing levels of education among women, greater social acceptance of employment for women with children and, not least of all, financial need. On average, women's earnings accounted for 29.4% of family income in dual-earner families in 1990.⁶ According to data from the 1988 National Child Care Survey, 13% (278,000) of two-parent families with children under 13 years of age had incomes below 1987 low-income cut-offs. If the parent primarily responsible for child care (usually the mother) had not been employed, the number of poor families would have doubled to 550,000.

The labour force participation rate of women in Canada increased from 45% in 1976 to 61% in 1991.⁷ For women with children -- especially young children -- the growth in the participation rate has been even more dramatic. Between 1976 and 1991, the participation rate of women with a youngest child aged 6 to 15 increased from 50% to 76%. During the same 15-year period, the participation rate for women with a youngest child aged 3 to 5 increased from 41% to 68%, while the rate for women with a youngest child under age 3 nearly doubled, from 32% in 1976 to 62% in 1991.⁸

The increase in mothers' involvement in the paid labour force has led to corresponding changes in family life and parental roles. The "typical" family no longer consists of a traditional breadwinner father and a full-time homemaker mother. By 1990, this description applied to only 32% of Canadian families with children under age 6, and to only 20% of families with a youngest child 6-15 years old.⁹ Analyses based on the Canadian National Child Care Study revealed that in 1988, 58% of two-parent families in Canada with at least one child under age 13 were dual-earner families. In addition, approximately 55% of the lone parents surveyed were employed.¹⁰

Managing both work and family demands on an ongoing basis and coping with frequent "emergencies" (such as sick children or care arrangements falling through) can sorely test the limits of many working parents. Such demands may leave little time for relaxation and detract from the pleasures of parenting and family life. In fact, continuing work-family conflict, when combined with limited social support, has been shown to cause stress, depression and anxiety, as well as adversely affect marital and job satisfaction, physical health and well-being, and parent-child interactions (Duxbury, Lee, Higgins and Mills, 1991; Hughes, Galinsky & Morris, 1992; Lero & Kyle, 1990; McLanahan & Adams, 1987).

2.2 Implications for Employers

Employers are faced with the challenge of accommodating increasing numbers of employees -- both men and women -- who are trying to balance both paid work and the responsibility of caring for dependent family members. Various studies in the United States and in Canada suggest that work-family conflict may be a problem for 25 to 45% of employed parents (Burden & Googins, 1985; Emlen and Koren, 1984; Hughes and Galinsky, 1988). National Child Care Survey data indicate that up to 38% of employed mothers who relied on non-parental child care in 1988 experienced moderate levels of tension on a daily basis as a result of juggling work, family, and child care commitments; and an additional 20% reported a great deal of tension (Lero, 1993).

Based on a recent survey of federal public sector employees, Duxbury et al (1991) concluded that 50% of mothers and 47% of fathers in dual-earner families experienced great difficulty managing their time. Many mothers and fathers were described as experiencing "role overload" -- a feeling of having more than one can handle, and feeling rushed and emotionally drained when returning home from work. Approximately 15% of the women surveyed said they felt that the difficulty they experienced in balancing work and family responsibilities was quite likely to hurt their career advancement.

In a Conference Board of Canada study, 66% of employees surveyed reported at least some difficulty balancing their work and family lives, including 20% who found it "difficult" or "very difficult" (MacBride-King & Paris, 1989). Those who found the task very difficult missed an average of 4.5 full days of work during the six months preceding the survey, compared to an average of 2.5 days for those who reported no difficulty. Other research indicates that in addition to its effect on absenteeism, work-family conflict may also contribute to tardiness and work disruptions, and to employees' preoccupation with family and child care problems while at work (Akyeampong, 1992; ARA Consulting, 1990; MacBride-King, 1990; Wener Consulting, 1991).

Many employers are beginning to recognize the costs involved when employees have ongoing difficulties balancing work and family demands. A study of Canadian organizations conducted by the Conference Board of Canada revealed that more than half of employers surveyed attributed one-quarter or more of their employees' absenteeism and stress problems to work-family conflicts (Paris, 1989). Helping employees manage their work and family responsibilities is especially crucial to productivity during times of retrenchment, as organizations try to maximize output with fewer employees.

In spite of their reported awareness of work-family issues, however, employers have been reluctant to implement policies that would help workers balance work and family responsibilities. Surveys of Canadian employers indicate limited availability of family-supportive benefits and alternative work arrangements such as flextime, permanent part-time work and job sharing, special leaves for family responsibilities, and workplace child care (Beach, Friendly and Schmidt, 1993; Hewitt Associates, 1991; Paris, 1989; Towers Perrin & Hudson Institute, 1991). Moreover, Paris (1989) has noted that access to such benefits and work arrangements is often granted at the discretion of management, and is often contingent on one's job classification. On their part, employees may be reluctant to voice their needs and their concerns for fear of jeopardizing their job or prospects for advancement, especially if their immediate supervisors are not supportive.

2.3 Implications for Public Policy Makers

Employer initiatives are only one route through which employees may gain access to family-supportive benefits and workplace options. Collective bargaining agreements provide another means of introducing change in the workplace. However, family-related benefits and work arrangements have not generally been high on most unions' agendas. In 1992, less than one-quarter of collective bargaining agreements contained provisions for flexible work hours; less than one-fifth addressed extended parental leave; and only 3% had provisions for child care facilities.¹¹ Moreover, the capacity of collective bargaining to afford workers access to family-related benefits is limited by the fact that only one-third of Canada's work force is unionized.

Governments, therefore, have an important role in seeing that Canadian workplaces adequately provide for workers with family responsibilities. Only legislation can ensure that all employed parents have the right to a minimum period of leave upon the birth or adoption of a child, while protecting each employee's seniority and benefits, and the right to return to the same job. Furthermore, only legislation can ensure that the benefits provided during such leaves are sufficient to limit the economic hardship that would affect young families otherwise. Without such protection, few options for working parents and significant inequities between and within workplaces will perpetuate.

Recent policy initiatives suggest that governments are recognizing the needs of workers with family responsibilities. In November of 1987, the First Ministers acknowledged that the integration of work and family responsibilities must be facilitated through policy, and directed their Status of Women ministers to address this issue.¹² Central to this initiative was the premise that equality for all workers, particularly women, could not be achieved if workers with dependents were not afforded the same treatment and range of employment opportunities as workers without dependents.

Following the First Ministers' statement of support for work-family policy initiatives, the federal **Unemployment Insurance Act** was amended. Under the previous legislation, women on maternity leave were eligible for up to 15 weeks of Unemployment Insurance benefits at rates up to a maximum of 60% of their insurable earnings. In November of 1990, Bill C-21 made most of the UIC's maternity, parental, and sickness programs more flexible, while extending the benefit periods. Ten weeks of parental benefits, available to either the mother or father (natural or adoptive), or shared between them, were added to the existing 15 week maternity benefit period.¹³ Provincial governments have since brought their employment standards legislation in line with the new benefit period, with unpaid parental leave entitlements ranging from 12 to 34 weeks above and beyond a 17 to 18 week period of unpaid maternity leave. Substantial variation remains between the provinces in eligibility requirements and in access to unpaid adoption and paternity leaves.¹⁴

These more generous leave provisions reflect greater government commitment to facilitating the integration of work and family responsibilities, and to ensuring employment equity for all parents, particularly women. However, in order to develop further policies in this area, governments require more information on the needs of working parents and their access to family-supportive work arrangements. Data are also required to help evaluate the effectiveness of existing legislation, incentive programs, and employer initiatives and to serve as a benchmark for comparisons at a future date.

2.4 The Need for Information on Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements

Over the past decade, a number of researchers have investigated the prevalence of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements provided by Canadian employers. Most of this research, however, was limited in scope: while some studies focused only on particular practices, such as the provision of workplace child care facilities or parental leave, others examined a broader range of benefits, but limited their investigations to specific geographic locations or sectors of the workforce. Exceptions include two recent studies which provide estimates of the prevalence of all types of family-supportive policies and practices across Canada based on employers' responses (Hewitt Associates, 1991; Paris, 1989).

While surveys of employers may provide some insight into the nature and prevalence of corporate responses to the needs of employees with family responsibilities, there are reasons to interpret the results of such surveys cautiously. For example, even though an employer may claim to offer a particular benefit, in practice the benefit may be provided only to employees who meet certain criteria. Eligibility may be based on a worker's job classification or particular skills (Johnson, 1986; Kingston, 1990; Mellor, 1986; Paris, 1989; Pay Research Bureau, 1989b), or be provided selectively at an employer's or supervisor's discretion (Kingston, 1990; Nelson & Couch, 1990). In addition, many employees may be unaware of their benefit options, and hence, not access them, even though formal policies exist.

Another limitation of employer surveys is the degree to which respondents represent employers in general. Not uncommonly, such surveys have quite low response rates. If one assumes that employers who respond to such surveys are more likely to offer benefits than non-respondents, employer surveys probably overestimate the availability of family-supportive programs.¹⁵

The National Child Care Survey (NCCS) is not affected by these problems, since it is based on direct interviews with a nationally representative sample of employed parents and therefore provides better estimates of parents' access to (and awareness of) family-supportive benefits and work arrangements than employer-based surveys. In addition, NCCS data were collected away from the workplace by impartial Statistics Canada interviewers: in other circumstances employees may be reluctant to respond candidly in their places of work to their own employer's survey.

NCCS data also show which family-supportive benefits and work arrangements parents would prefer. Although other surveys have addressed parents' preferences, these studies have often focused on parents' views regarding a single option, such as flexible work hours. Unlike the NCCS survey, such studies do not provide information about parental preferences among a wide range of family-supportive benefits and workplace practices.

Chapter 3

SOURCE OF THE DATA: THE NATIONAL CHILD CARE SURVEY

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements: Data Source and Coverage

Data Source: This report is based on data collected through the National Child Care Survey in the fall of 1988. The survey was a special supplement to the monthly Canadian Labour Force Survey.

Coverage: When expressed as weighted population estimates, the data in this report represent approximately 1.4 million parents in Canada who worked for pay outside the home in the fall of 1988 while assuming primary responsibility in their families for arranging child care for one or more children under 13 years of age. Approximately 94% of these parents were women. Both full-time and part-time employees were represented, as were parents in both one- and two-parent families.

Not represented are parents who were self-employed, or unpaid workers in a family farm or business, as well as home-based workers. Analyses in this report represent approximately 84% of all families in Canada in which the parent with primary child care responsibilities was employed.

Data presented in this report were collected through the 1988 National Child Care Survey (NCCS). The study was designed to provide reliable information about child care needs, child care use patterns, and parents' preferences among employment and child care options. Information was also collected about parents' work schedules, their access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements, the tension parents experience in balancing work and family responsibilities, and the effects of child care problems on parents' job performance.

3.1 Data Collection -- Interviews with Parents with Primary Responsibility for Child Care

The 1988 National Child Care Survey (NCCS) was conducted across Canada in the fall of 1988 as a special supplement to the monthly Canadian Labour Force Survey. Data were collected only in households consisting of an "economic family" with at least one child under 13 years of age. (An economic family includes people living in the same dwelling who are all related by blood, marriage or adoption.) The NCCS interviews were conducted either over the telephone or in person by Statistics Canada interviewers. Employment and child care data collected for each family pertain to a common reference week in September or October of 1988. A complete description of survey sampling procedures, methodology, and instrumentation is provided by Lero, Pence, Shields, Brockman & Goelman (1992) in the **Canadian National Child Care Study: Introductory report**.

NCCS interviews were conducted with parents who identified themselves as having the primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in the family. Parents may have been natural or adoptive, step-parents, or adults acting as parents. When both parents were equally responsible for making child care arrangements, the mother was interviewed and designated as having primary child care responsibilities. Approximately 94% of the parents interviewed were women.

NCCS interviews were completed with parents in 24,155 families across Canada. Data were then weighted to represent 2,724,300 Canadian families with at least one child under age 13. In 60% of the families covered in the survey, the parent with primary child care responsibilities was employed (representing some 1,634,000 families).

3.2 Data Subset Selected for the Study of Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements

Although NCCS data represent all parents in Canada with at least one child under age 13,¹⁶ this report focuses on those parents who were paid employees and who also assumed primary responsibility in their families for arranging child care. Readers interested in the general availability of family-supportive work arrangements to Canadian parents, including those without primary child care responsibilities, should refer to Appendix Table B-4.

Readers should note that for the purposes of this report "employed" parents do not include those who were:

- employed, but working in their own homes;
- employed, but on temporary lay-off, or with a job that had not yet started;
- self-employed; or
- unpaid family workers (working on a family farm or in a family business).¹⁷

With these exceptions, the data in this report, when weighted, represent 1,369,100 employed parents with primary responsibility for child care.

Table 1

Employed Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities¹ Represented by Weighted NCCS Data

Characteristic	Number	%
Included:		
Paid workers employed outside the home	1,369,100	83.8
Excluded:		
Works at home		
Paid worker	54,000	3.3
Self-employed	94,700	5.8
Unpaid family worker	15,600	1.0
Self-employed ²	91,900	5.6
Unpaid family workers ³	8,800	0.5
Total employed	1,634,100	100.0

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

² Self-employed, works outside the home or in unstated location.

³ Unpaid family worker, works outside the home or in unstated location.

Information about employment characteristics was collected for parents both with and without primary child care responsibilities.¹⁸ Consequently, results can be presented separately for both of these groups. Normally, labour force statistics are tabulated by sex, and the relationship between labour force characteristics and family variables are presented only for women. The approach taken in the National Child Care Survey focuses more directly on the parent (of either sex) who assumed primary responsibility for child care arrangements. Such an approach recognizes that, while women still assume a disproportionate share of child care responsibilities, men may also assume such responsibilities. Comparisons between mothers and fathers (with and without primary responsibility for child care) are shown in Appendix Table B-3.

3.3 “Availability” of Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Versus “Use”

The data analyzed in this report are based on parents' responses to a series of questions on the availability of specific family-supportive benefits and work arrangements. These questions are included in Appendix A. The term "available" refers to instances in which benefits were reportedly available to respondents or provided at their workplace, whether they were using such benefits at the time of the survey or not. For example, parents were asked if their employer provided workplace child care facilities, or provided additional pay to "top up" Unemployment Insurance maternity leave benefits. Positive answers to these questions indicated only that respondents' employers provided these arrangements or benefits, not that respondents were using them at the time of the survey.

Respondents' answers to questions were limited by their knowledge of the particular benefits or options available in their workplace. Awareness of available options may have been limited by a lack of accessible information about such benefits or by a lack of interest or need. Furthermore, employees may not have asked their employers about such benefits or alternative arrangements if no information was provided, assuming that they were not available. As a result, the estimates in this report on the availability of family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements are probably somewhat conservative, but accurately reflect parents' knowledge and perceptions. The response distribution for individual family-supportive work arrangements is included in Appendix Table B-3.

Chapter 4

CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES IN WHICH THE PARENT WITH PRIMARY CHILD CARE RESPONSIBILITIES WORKS OUTSIDE THE HOME

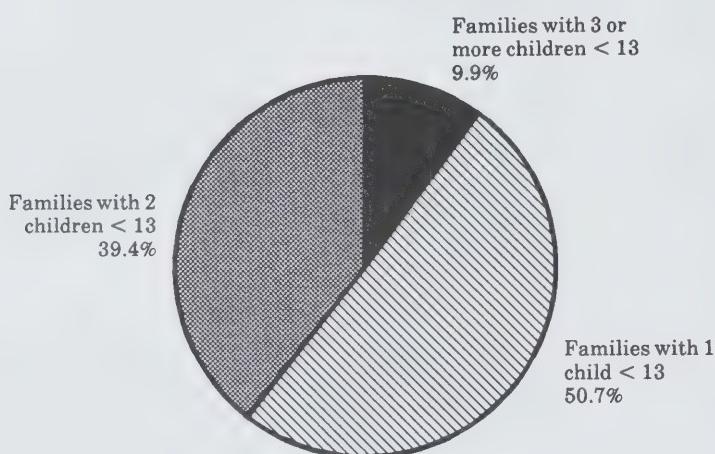
This chapter provides a demographic overview of Canadian families in which the parent primarily responsible for arranging child care worked outside the home as a paid worker in the fall of 1988. In the majority of such families (94%), the parent designated as having primary child care responsibilities was the mother. Almost 81% of parents with primary child care responsibilities were part of a dual-earner couple; 14% were coping with the demands of paid work and child rearing as a lone parent; and just under 5% were sole earners with a spouse or partner who was unemployed or not in the labour force.

The number and ages of children in a family can greatly influence the daily routines and responsibilities of parents who work outside the home. For example, the challenges faced by a parent with a single school-aged child are considerably different from those experienced by a parent with two children under 6 years of age who may participate in different child care arrangements. Of employed parents with primary responsibility for child care, more than half (51%) had only one child under age 13; 39% had two children under age 13; 10% had three or more children under age 13. In addition, 53% had at least one child under 6 years of age, and 14% had two or more children in this age range (Figures 1 and 2). Furthermore, 31% of employed parents with primary child care responsibilities had a youngest child under age 3, and one in six had a youngest child under 18 months old (Figure 3).

The belief that employed parents with primary child care responsibilities choose to work full time only when their children are old enough to attend school is dispelled by data illustrated in Figure 4. The presence of preschool-age children (5 years of age or younger) did not have a significant effect on whether parents worked full time or part time. Roughly three-quarters of employed parents with primary child care responsibilities for children under 13 worked full time, regardless of the age of their youngest child (Figure 4).

Figure 1

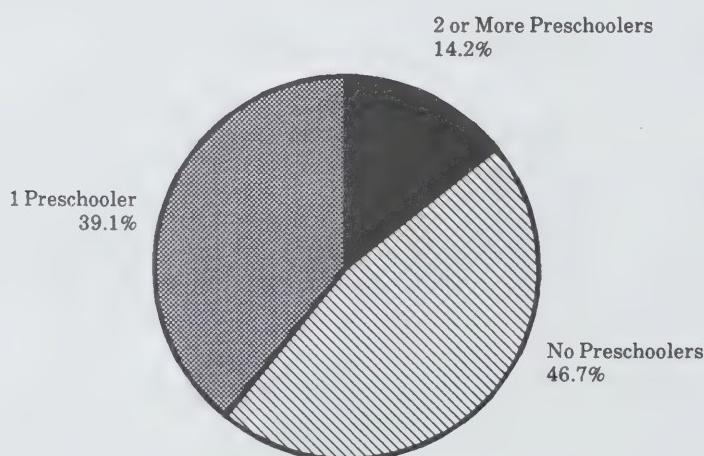
Families in Which the Parent Primarily Responsible for Child Care is Employed, by Number of Children Under 13, 1988



Based on 1,369,100 families with at least one child under age 13 in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed and worked outside the home.

Figure 2

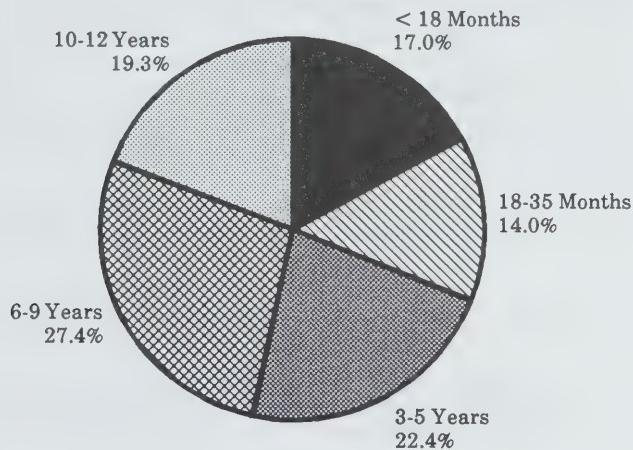
Families in Which the Parent Primarily Responsible for Child Care is Employed, by Presence of Preschool Children (<6 Years), 1988



Based on 1,369,100 families with at least one child under age 13 in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed and worked outside the home.

Figure 3

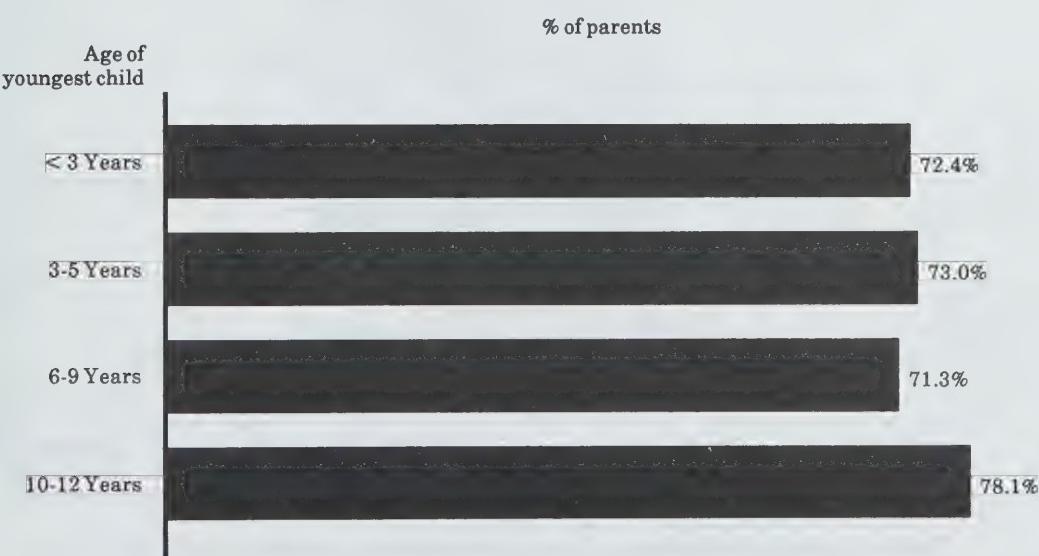
Families in Which the Parent Primarily Responsible for Child Care is Employed, by Age of Youngest Child, 1988



Based on 1,369,100 families with at least one child under age 13 in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed and worked outside the home.

Figure 4

Percentage of Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities Employed Full Time, by Age of Youngest Child, 1988



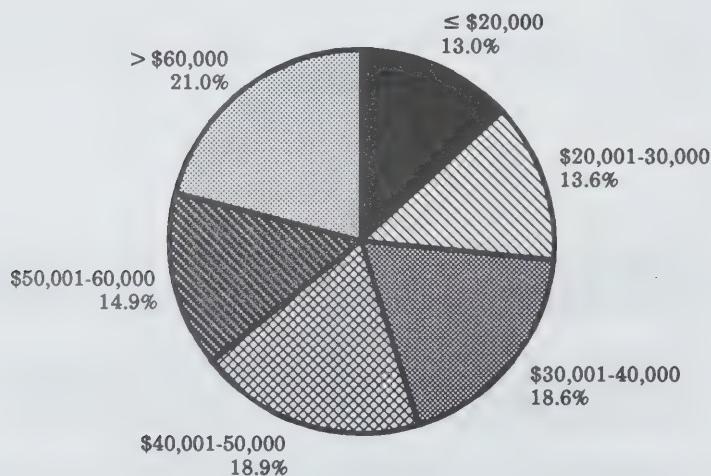
Based on 1,369,100 families with at least one child under age 13 in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed and worked outside the home.

Certainly, some parents manage heavier family responsibilities than others. Lero, Goelman, Pence, Brockman & Nuttall (1992) defined families with high child-rearing demands as those with three or more children under age 13 years; or two or more children under age 6; or one child younger than 18 months old. Approximately 30% of the families in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed outside the home met one or more of these criteria (data not shown). If single-parent families and families with children who have special needs or health problems -- two other types of families which face particularly challenging situations -- are added, the proportion of employed parents with primary responsibility for child care with high child-rearing demands rises to 48% (data not shown).

Parental incomes for families in which the parent with primary child care responsibilities was employed outside the home varied widely (in two-parent families, parental income refers to the combined incomes of both parents). In 1987, over half of such families (55%) reported parental incomes of over \$40,000, while one-fifth (21%) reported parental incomes exceeding \$60,000. On the other end of the spectrum, 13% of families in which the parent with primary child care responsibilities worked outside the home reported parental incomes of \$20,000 or less (Figure 5).

Figure 5

Parental Income in Families With Children Under 13 in Which the Parent Primarily Responsible for Child Care is Employed, 1988¹



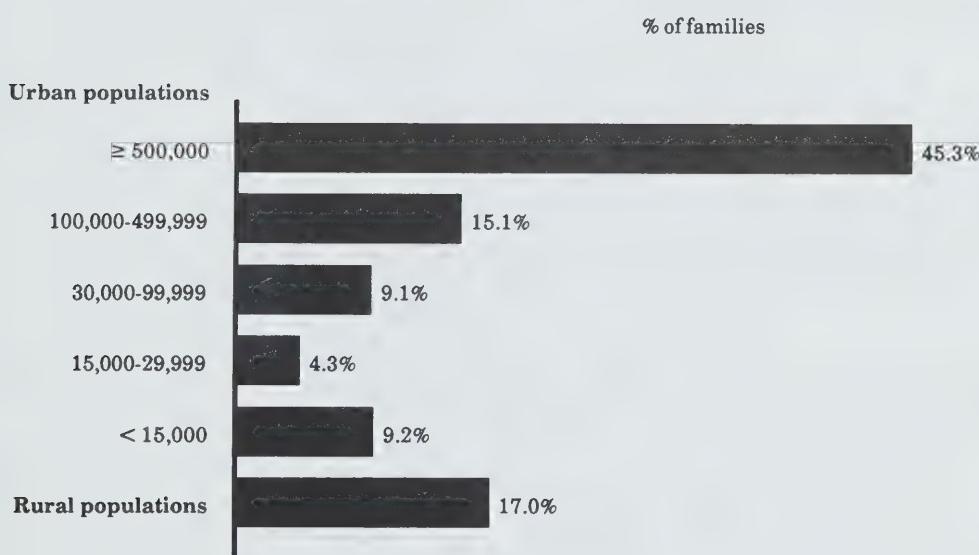
¹ Income includes gross domestic income from wages and salaries, net income from self-employment, income from government sources, and other income such as investment income, alimony, etc. for 1987. In single-parent families, parental income was reported by the interviewed parent. In two-parent families, data pertain to the combined income of both parents.

Based on 1,369,100 families with at least one child under age 13 in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed and worked outside the home.

Depending on where they live, parents may face additional work-family challenges such as lengthy commuting times to and from work and limited access to child care facilities and other parenting resources. Of families in which the parent with primary child care responsibilities worked outside the home, 45% lived in large urban centres with populations of 500,000 or more. Nearly one-third (31%) lived in rural areas or in centres with less than 30,000 people (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Urban/Rural Distribution of Families With Children Under 13 in Which the Parent Primarily Responsible for Child Care is Employed, 1988



Based on 1,369,100 families with at least one child under age 13 in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed and worked outside the home.

For further information about the demographic and employment characteristics of employed parents, including those without primary responsibility for child care, see Appendix Tables B-1 and B-2.

Chapter 5

THE AVAILABILITY OF FAMILY-SUPPORTIVE BENEFITS AND WORK ARRANGEMENTS TO PARENTS WITH PRIMARY CHILD CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Overview

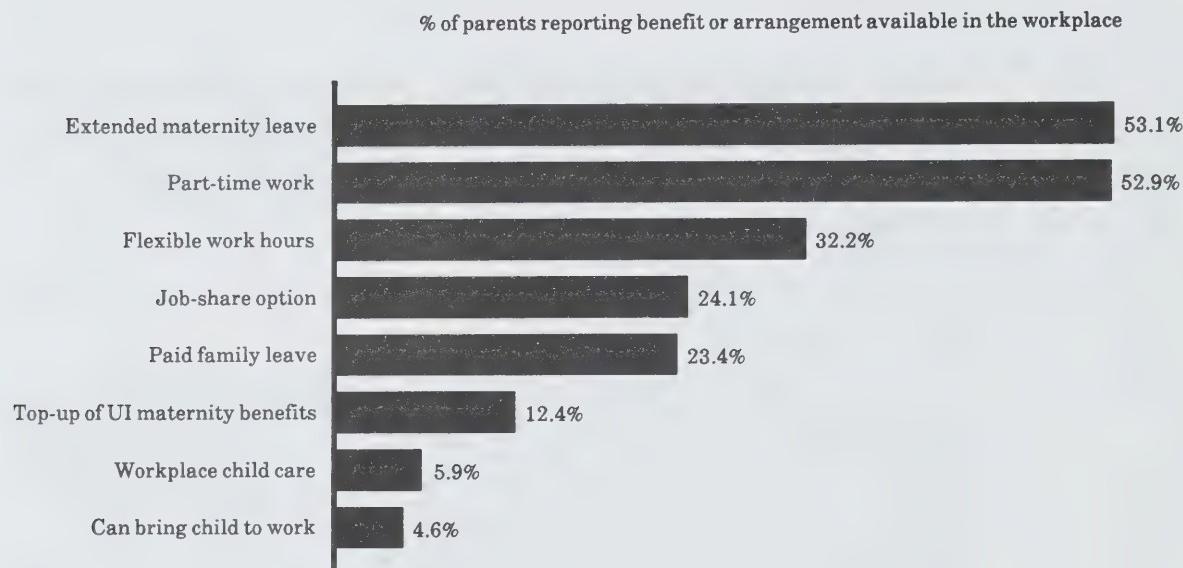
In order to determine parents' access to a variety of family-supportive benefits and workplace practices, respondents were asked if specific benefits and arrangements were available to them at their places of employment.¹⁹ As noted in Section 3.3, the term "available" represents instances in which benefits and flexible options were available to respondents or provided by their employers, whether parents were using such benefits at the time of the survey or not. Respondents' answers were limited by their knowledge of the particular benefits and arrangements potentially available to them.

As illustrated in Figure 7, one of the most commonly available work arrangements was extended maternity leave.²⁰ Of employed parents with primary child care responsibilities, approximately half (53%) indicated that their employer allowed maternity leave to extend beyond the statutory requirement.²¹ Families with limited financial resources, however, would likely find this option difficult to afford: only 9% of parents who knew that this benefit was available at their workplace indicated that their employers provided full or partial pay during the extended period. Similarly, only 12% of respondents indicated that their employers would provide additional pay to "top up" Unemployment Insurance maternity leave benefits.

Arrangements allowing a reduction in work hours were also common: 53% of respondents (including regular part-time workers) reported that they could work part time; while 24% said their employers would allow them to job share. For parents with primary responsibility for child care, a reduced work load can mean more time to attend to family matters and less reliance on non-parental child care arrangements. Again, however, a reduction in work hours may be a realistic option only for families that can afford the resulting reduction in income and benefits. In some cases, parents who opt for reduced hours also may find their career progress and professional development hindered.

Figure 7

Family-Supportive Work Arrangements Available to Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities in Families With Children Under 13, 1988



Based on 1,369,100 families with at least one child under age 13 in which the parent primarily responsible for child care was employed and worked outside the home.

Flexible work hours allow employees to work the same number of hours, but at more convenient times. Approximately one-third (32%) of parents with primary child care responsibilities reported that flexible work hour arrangements were available to them. This option may help parents arrange their work days to better meet family obligations, without the financial or professional penalties inherent in reduced work hours. In practice, however, the degree to which employers allow such flexibility can vary considerably and flexibility may not be provided with sufficient latitude to make a real difference in the day-to-day lives of employees.²²

Access to paid family leave was reported by 23% of parents with primary child care responsibilities. Among other things, these short-term "emergency" leaves allow parents time off with pay when children are sick or have medical or dental appointments, or when child care arrangements fall through. The majority of parents without such benefits often "pay" for such time off by using their own sick leave or vacation entitlements, or by working extra hours to make up for lost time (when that is feasible).

Access to workplace child care facilities was reported by relatively few parents (6%). Moreover, the proportion of parents using such centres at the time of the survey was considerably lower than that. Even when employers provide workplace day care, parents often use other arrangements for their children for reasons such as affordability and personal preference, or because no spaces are available in the on-site centre. Other parents may not have children in an appropriate age range to take advantage of such arrangements.

5.2 Family Characteristics and the Availability of Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements

Parents' access to workplace benefits and practices was examined in relation to family characteristics. Such analyses enable readers to appreciate the extent to which parents in a variety of family situations, including single parents and others with heavy child-rearing demands, had access to family-supportive work arrangements.

5.2.1 Child-Rearing Demands

The literature suggests that few employers are aware of the personal needs and circumstances of their employees (Hewitt Associates, 1991; Mayfield, 1989; Paris, 1989). Consequently, one would not expect to find parents reporting workplace benefits and arrangements neatly tailored to their families' needs. This proved to be the case: when the number and ages of children in the home were considered, the availability of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements did not increase proportionately to parents' child care needs and family responsibilities (Tables 2,3, and 4).²³

Table 2

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents¹, by Number of Children in the Family, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Total (N = 1,369,100)	1 Child < 13 (N = 693,900)	2 Children < 13 (N = 539,300)	3 or More Children < 13 (N = 136,000)
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement available in their workplace)				
Reduced hours:				
Part-time work	52.9	48.5	55.2	66.0
Job-sharing	24.1	23.0	24.9	26.7
Flexible work hours	32.2	31.2	32.4	36.4
Paid leave for family reasons ²	23.4	24.4	23.0	19.4
Maternity leave:				
UI top-up	12.4	12.1	12.8	12.0
Extended maternity leave ³	53.1	51.9	55.0	52.0
Workplace child care facility	5.9	6.2	5.9	5.1 ^a
Can bring child to work	4.6	5.2	3.6	5.3 ^a

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

Table 3

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents¹, by Presence of Preschool Children, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Total (N = 1,369,100)	With 1 or More Preschool Children (< 6 Years) (N = 729,800)	With School-Age Children Only (6-12 Years) (N = 639,300)
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement available in their workplace)			
Reduced hours:			
Part-time work	52.9	52.9	52.8
Job-sharing	24.1	23.2	25.2
Flexible work hours	32.2	31.1	33.3
Paid leave for family reasons ²	23.4	23.3	23.5
Maternity leave ³ :			
UI top-up	12.4	15.0	9.3
Extended maternity leave ⁴	53.1	57.7	47.9
Workplace child care facility	5.9	5.8	6.1
Can bring child to work	4.6	3.4	5.8

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Parents of older children were less likely to know whether their employer provided maternity leave benefits.

⁴ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

Table 4

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents¹, by Age of Youngest Child, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Total (N = 1,369,100)	Age of Youngest Child				
		< 18 Months (N = 232,700)	18-35 Months (N = 191,100)	3-5 Years (N = 306,000)	6-9 Years (N = 374,700)	10-12 Years (N = 284,700)
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement available in their workplace)						
Reduced hours:						
Part-time work	52.9	52.5	52.1	53.7	54.7	50.3
Job-sharing	24.1	21.7	23.2	24.3	24.0	26.9
Flexible work hours	32.2	30.6	32.6	30.6	34.0	32.4
Paid leave for family reasons ²	23.4	22.5	23.7	23.6	22.2	25.3
Maternity leave ³ :						
UI top-up	12.4	15.7	15.0	14.6	10.8	7.3
Extended maternity leave ⁴	53.1	63.7	57.4	53.2	48.7	46.9
Workplace child care facility	5.9	6.1	6.3	5.3	5.8	6.4
Can bring child to work	4.6	3.6 ^a	2.9 ^a	3.7	5.8	5.9

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Parents of older children were less likely to know whether their employer provided maternity leave benefits.

⁴ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

One exception to this observation is that parents of larger families were more likely to report access to part-time work arrangements than parents with only one or two children under age 13 (Table 2). Of parents with three or more children under age 13, 66% reported that they were able to work (or were already working) part time, compared to 49% of parents with only one child under age 13. A straight comparison between these two groups may be misleading, however, as respondents with larger families were more likely to be working part time already, and may select jobs or workplaces that afford them greater flexibility.

Previous research based on the Canadian National Child Care Study appears to support these observations. In their study of parental work patterns, Lero, Goelman, Pence, Brockman and Nuttall (1992) found that in families with three or more children, employed parents with primary child care responsibilities were more likely to work part time than parents with smaller families. Lero et al. also found that parents with large families were more likely to work non-standard hours, including evenings and weekends, and were more likely to off-shift their work hours with a spouse in order to accommodate child care needs. For many parents with large families, part-time jobs and non-standard work schedules may have been sought specifically to reduce the pressures involved in balancing paid work and family responsibilities, and hence more accurately reflect the adaptations made by these parents than additional options extended to them by their employers.²⁴

5.2.2 Family Structure

Access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements varied between one- and two-parent families. Single parents were considerably less likely to be able to reduce their work hours or to job-share. Only 42% of single parents with primary child care responsibilities reported access to part-time work arrangements, compared to 55% of parents in two-parent families, and only 20% of single parents reported they could job-share, compared to 25% of parents in two-parent families (Table 5).

Table 5

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents of Children Under 13¹, by Family Structure, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Total (N = 1,369,100)	Two-Parent Families (N = 1,172,000)	One-Parent Families (N = 197,200)
	(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement available in their workplace)		
Reduced hours:			
Part-time work	52.9	54.6	42.4
Job-sharing	24.1	24.8	19.9
Flexible work hours	32.2	32.7	29.2
Paid leave for family reasons ²	23.4	23.3	23.6
Maternity leave:			
UI top-up	12.4	12.6	11.2
Extended maternity leave ³	53.1	54.1	47.3
Workplace child care facility	5.9	6.0	5.7
Can bring child to work	4.6	4.8	3.3 ⁴

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

These findings are partly due to the fact that many parents who reported that their employer would allow them to work part time or job-share were already working reduced hours. Single parents' limited access to part-time work arrangements reflects the relatively small proportion of employed single parents who were actually working part time when surveyed. Separate analyses (not included in this report) revealed that 16% of employed single parents worked part time, compared to 29% of their married counterparts.

Another factor explaining the difference in access to part-time work for married and single parents with primary child care responsibilities is that the two groups differ in education and occupation. In particular, single parents were somewhat less likely to be employed as professionals or technicians -- occupations that appear to be more conducive to part-time work and job-sharing. In any event, financial needs generally require that single parents work full time in order to make ends meet; therefore, even in workplaces where the option to work fewer hours exists, many single parents could not afford to do so.

Single parents, then, face considerable obstacles to achieving harmony between work and family life. Reduced access to part-time work and job-sharing options, combined with the same limited access to other family-supportive work arrangements as other parents, means that many must cope with high demands on their time and energy with few resources to support them.

5.3 Parents' Employment Characteristics and the Availability of Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements

When the availability of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements is examined in relation to parents' employment characteristics, differences between and within workplaces become apparent. Parents' access to such options varied by full- or part-time work status, employment sector, occupation, and skill level.

Parents employed on a part-time basis were much more likely to have access to flexible work schedules than those employed full time, but were less likely to have access to such family-supportive benefits as paid family responsibility leave or additional pay during maternity leave (Table 6). In addition, other research indicates that many part-time employees are excluded from medical and dental plans, private pension plans, and other benefits, or receive reduced or limited benefits (Krahn, 1992). Considering these inequities, it seems likely that some of the parents who were employed part time (roughly 27% of employed parents with primary responsibility for child care) sacrificed earnings and access to paid benefits for reduced work loads and more flexible hours.

Parents employed in the public sector (approximately 26% of employed parents with primary responsibility for child care) enjoyed more generous family-supportive work arrangements than those in the private sector (Table 6). For example, federal public service employees were entitled to employer-provided benefits during the waiting period before Unemployment Insurance maternity leave benefits commence; "top-ups" of UI benefits during maternity leaves; extended leaves of up to five years for the care and nurturing of preschool-aged children; and up to five days of paid family responsibility leave.²⁵ Public sector employees were also more likely to be able to job-share than those in the private sector, and equally likely to be able to work part time. Private sector employees, however, were more likely to be able to work flexible hours than those in the public sector: approximately 35% of parents employed in the private sector said they could work flexible hours, compared to 24% of those in the public sector.

Table 6

**Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to
Parents of Children Under 13¹, by Employment Status and Employment
Sector, 1988**

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Parents' Employment Status			Parents' Employment Sector	
	Total (N=1,369,100)	Full Time (N=1,004,000)	Part Time (N=365,100)	Private (N=1,013,100)	Public (N=356,000)
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement available in their workplace)					
Reduced hours:					
Part-time work	52.9	35.7	100.0	53.0	52.6
Job-sharing	24.1	20.6	33.7	22.3	29.4
Flexible work hours	32.2	27.1	46.2	34.9	24.3
Paid leave for family reasons ²	23.4	26.7	14.3	20.3	32.1
Maternity leave:					
UI top-up	12.4	14.0	7.9	9.1	21.7
Extended maternity leave ³	53.1	55.3	47.3	48.1	67.4
Workplace child care facility	5.9	6.0	5.8	4.6	9.9
Can bring child to work	4.6	3.6	7.3	4.9	3.7

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

The availability of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements also varied among parents with different occupational skills (Table 7). While the patterns in this table are complex, several underlying trends are evident. In general, parents with jobs requiring more specialized skills and those with higher positions in their organizations reported greater access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements than those with fewer skills or lower-level positions. This was not the case for the availability of part-time work arrangements, however, which were generally equally available to employees with fewer skills and those with more skills. This exception is largely because part-time employment is prevalent among less-skilled groups: part-time work is often the only work available to parents with limited job skills.

Of the occupational skill level categories, unskilled workers generally reported the least access to most family-supportive benefits and arrangements, while professionals, senior and middle managers, and semi-professionals and technicians reported the greatest access. Senior and middle managers, while less likely than other groups to have reduced work hour options available to them, were the most likely of all groups to have access to flexible work schedules and paid leave options. (Readers should note that respondents employed in the public sector were more likely to be classified as professionals, senior and middle managers, or semi-professionals and technicians (61%) than those in the private sector (27%).)

At the time of the survey, nearly 200,000 parents in Canada with primary responsibility for child care held jobs classified as "unskilled". Such jobs, which generally provide few benefits, low pay, little job autonomy, and limited security, place considerable burdens on parents who must manage both work and family responsibilities.

Table 7

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents of Children Under 13¹, by Occupational Skill Level, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Total (N=1,369,100)	Professionals (N=177,100)	Senior/ Middle Managers (N=97,000)	Semi- professionals and Technicians (N=217,400)		Supervisors (N=46,700)	Skilled Workers (N=369,800)	Semi- skilled Workers (N=264,400)	Unskilled Workers (N=196,500)
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement available in their workplace)									
Reduced hours:									
Part-time work	52.9	53.9	31.2	71.0	43.7	47.3	59.1	47.0	
Job-sharing	24.1	36.6	21.6	30.6	16.8 ^q	22.4	20.0	17.5	
Flexible work hours	32.2	21.6	43.4	30.4	27.1	37.5	33.6	27.5	
Paid leave for family reasons ²	23.4	28.6	41.4	18.8	24.0	29.0	18.8	10.3	
Maternity leave:									
UI top-up	12.4	15.7	18.0	18.7	7.9 ^q	12.0	9.6	5.0	
Extended maternity leave ³	53.1	69.3	61.5	67.6	45.8	50.5	45.7	35.0	
Workplace child care facility	5.9	12.6	9.3	9.0	...	3.5	4.6	...	
Can bring child to work	4.6	4.9 ^q	6.7 ^q	1.8 ^q	...	4.7	5.8	4.1 ^q	

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers. All estimates for military personnel were too small to be expressed.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

Table 8 shows the availability of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements by parents' occupational categories. Parents employed in occupations requiring higher levels of education or greater job skills had more access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements than those in other occupations.

Table 8

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents of Children Under 13¹, by Major Occupational Category, 1988

Occupational Category	Number	(%)	Workplace Benefit or Arrangement							
			Part-time Work	Job-sharing	Flexible Work Hours	Paid Leave for Family Reasons ²	UI Top-up	Extended Maternity Leave ³	Workplace Child Care	Can Bring Child to Work
(% in each occupational category reporting benefit or arrangement available in their workplace)										
Clerical	443,900	32.4	49.1	20.3	34.3	30.4	13.6	53.3	3.8	3.7
Medicine and health Service	173,400	12.7	74.4	33.2	28.9	17.7	19.6	71.4	8.2	...
Managerial and administrative	168,200	12.3	70.5	26.2	36.4	12.5	5.0 ^q	36.2	5.8	8.8
Teaching	129,700	9.5	32.2	19.4	41.2	38.6	16.2	61.9	7.7	5.4 ^q
Processing, machining, fabricating	123,900	9.1	66.6	44.4	11.2	24.9	13.9	68.7	15.5	6.0 ^q
Sales	101,900	7.4	19.2	9.5	17.3	10.4	5.1 ^q	40.6	...	...
Total in major occupational categories listed	1,235,800	90.3								
Total in all occupations	1,369,100	100.0								

¹ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

Many less-skilled jobs fall into one of three categories: services (mainly food and beverage services, cooking, and janitorial work); processing, machining, or fabricating (largely in the textile and food processing industries); and sales (primarily store clerks).²⁶ More than one-quarter (27%) of parents with primary responsibility for child care held jobs in one of these three occupational categories.

Access to nearly all family-supportive benefits and work arrangements was most limited for parents employed in processing, machining, and fabricating occupations. While parents employed in sales and service occupations reported better than average access to part-time work and flexible work hours, parents in both groups reported lower than average access to other family-supportive benefits and arrangements. It is likely that many parents in sales and service occupations choose these jobs because of the part-time work and flexible hour options they often provide. These parents may "trade off" access to other benefits and arrangements for the ability to work schedules more suited to their needs.

Of parents in all occupational categories, teachers and health professionals (primarily nurses) were most likely to report access to extended maternity leave, job-sharing, and workplace child care facilities, while parents in management or administrative roles were more likely than most other parents to report having access to paid family leave and flexible work hours.

5.4 Summary

Canadian parents generally lack access to a variety of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements that might help them to balance work and family responsibilities. The two most common arrangements (extended maternity leave and access to part-time work) were available to slightly more than half of parents with primary child care responsibilities. Both arrangements, however, involve significant financial and professional costs to employees.

Of other family-supportive options, flexible work hours were available to 32% of parents surveyed; paid family leaves were available to 23%; "top-up" funds for Unemployment Insurance maternity leave benefits were available to 12%; and workplace child care facilities were provided by employers of 6% of parents with primary child care responsibilities.

Parents with heavier child-rearing demands were no more likely than other parents to have access to family-supportive benefits and arrangements in the workplace. Reconciling work and family obligations must pose a considerable challenge to parents in such instances:

- nearly two-thirds of parents with three or more children had no flexibility in their work hours;
- more than three-quarters of parents with preschool-age children (under age 6) had no access to paid short-term leaves for when their children are sick or when child care arrangements fall through; and
- single parents, who accounted for one in seven employed parents with primary child care responsibilities, were considerably less likely than other parents to be able to reduce their work hours to part time.

Inequities in access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements occurred among parents with different employment characteristics:

- except for flexible work hours, part-time employees generally had less access to family-supportive benefits and arrangements than full-time employees;

- public sector workers reported considerably better access to family-related leaves than private sector workers;
- upper-level managers and more highly-skilled workers generally reported greater access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements than lower-level and less skilled workers; and
- parents working in processing, machining and fabricating occupations reported the least access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements; while teachers, health professionals, and managers reported the greatest access to such options.

Since access to family-supportive benefits and work arrangements appears to depend more on parents' employment characteristics than on the nature of their child-rearing and family responsibilities, parents with particularly heavy burdens (especially single parents, parents with children who have special needs or health problems, and parents of very young children) are more likely than others to have difficulty managing their work and family commitments. Such difficulties can affect employers through increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, and lower morale among employees; and adversely affect the quality of family life for parents and children.



Chapter 6

PARENTS' EXPERIENCES IN COMBINING WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents benefit in many ways from participating in the paid labour force. In addition to economic security and employer-provided benefits, they may gain personal gratification from their jobs and satisfaction from their accomplishments. In addition, friendships with co-workers may expand social support networks and reduce the isolation that some parents identify as a disadvantage of remaining home with their children. Yet, when parents of young children combine paid work and family responsibilities, it inevitably results in potential conflict and strain, as finite amounts of time and physical and emotional energy are expended in one or the other domain, or in the efforts required to coordinate the two.

Surprisingly little research has been done on "work-family fit" and the circumstances that ease harmonization of work and family responsibilities. Instead, social scientists and human resource specialists have focused their attention on understanding the factors that contribute to work-family conflict. This focus is justified since work-family conflict appears to be widespread, and because it can adversely affect performance both at home and at work. Indeed, work-family conflict often results in increased absenteeism, high job turnover, and reduced productivity. As well, it may jeopardize parents' physical and mental health, their marital and life satisfaction, and their children's well-being.

Researchers now understand that the nature of work-family conflict changes over the course of one's work career and as children grow older and their needs change. In effect, work-family conflict can best be explained as the result of a complex interplay between work-related stresses and supports, family stresses and supports, and the extent to which personal and community-based resources, such as child care services, are available and appropriate to meet individual and family needs. As a result, parents may differ in the degree to which they experience work-family conflict, and in the extent to which particular factors are responsible for the conflict they experience. After reviewing more than 80 studies of work and family issues, Dana Freidman of the Conference Board of New York identified the following major job-related and family-related sources of work-family conflict:

1. A job can contribute to work-family conflict when an employee has:

- long work hours;
- a burdensome work schedule involving overtime, weekend work, travel, or shift work;
- little control over the hours worked;
- a job with little autonomy;
- a very absorbing job;
- no job security;
- recently changed jobs due to promotion, lay-off or relocation;
- a very physically or mentally demanding job;

- a negative social climate at work;
 - unsupportive co-workers;
 - insensitive supervisors; or
 - a work environment in which inflexible work policies frustrate the efforts employees make to meet both their work and family obligations.
2. Families can contribute to work-family conflict if an employee has:
- a disapproving or unsupportive spouse;
 - inequities in the marriage;
 - an unequal division of home labour;
 - limited support as a single parent;
 - unstable child care arrangements; or
 - elder care responsibilities, especially for relatives living at a distance.²⁷

Research has also shown that the experience of work-family conflict reflects two basic problems: **role overload** (sometimes referred to as role strain) and **work-family interference** (also called schedule incompatibility). Role overload occurs when an individual has multiple roles (e.g., worker, spouse, parent) and each role imposes demands on the person's time, energy, and commitment to the point that the demands on a worker's time and energy are too great to allow her or him to perform these roles adequately or comfortably. Under these circumstances, a parent may feel continually rushed, tired and overloaded. Work-family interference occurs when the demands of one role come into direct conflict with another, due to competing time pressures. Examples include difficulties that arise in scheduling children's medical or dental appointments, attending school-related meetings or functions, picking up a child at a day care centre before closing time, or being home with a child who is sick. Other circumstances that may cause parents difficulty include problems arranging for child care when overtime work is required or when work schedules change unpredictably. In effect, such interference occurs because work and family activities must be performed at the same time, but in different locations. Scheduling problems are exacerbated when parents work long hours or have little or no flexibility in their work schedules.

6.1 Parents' Perceptions of Work-Family Tension and its Sources

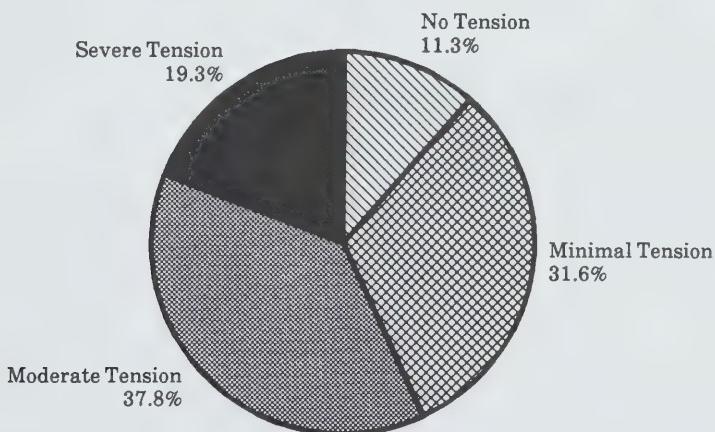
Parents with primary responsibility for arranging child care were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, how much tension they experience on a daily basis juggling work, family, and child care responsibilities. They were also asked to indicate how much tension they felt in regard to 15 potential stressors: these included their work hours and work schedule, their spouse's work hours and work schedule, the cost and quality of their child care arrangements, the logistics of scheduling child care, difficulty maintaining a balance between work demands and family responsibilities, and feeling tired and overloaded.

This particular set of questions was asked only of parents who worked at their jobs or businesses in the reference week and who used some form of non-parental child care while working. Parents who were absent from work (due to illness, a temporary lay-off, maternity or parental leave, or other reasons) were excluded, as were those who provided all child care either by themselves or with the help of a spouse or partner. The results reported here pertain only to parents with primary child care responsibilities who were paid employees who worked outside the home.

When asked to rate their daily level of work-family tension on a scale of 1 to 10, parents gave an average rating of 4.3. Figure 8 shows that approximately 89% of parents with primary responsibility for child care employed in Canadian workplaces in 1988 experienced at least some tension in juggling work and family responsibilities. Roughly 38% of parents experienced moderate amounts of tension, while 19% (almost one in five) experienced a great deal of work-family tension on an on-going or daily basis.²⁸

Figure 8

Degree of Work-Family Tension Experienced Daily by Parents With Primary Responsibility for Child Care, 1988



The data, when weighted, represent the responses of 873,300 parents with primary responsibility for child care for at least one child under age 13. All parents worked for pay outside the home and utilized some form of non-parental child care arrangements while working.

A significant amount of work-family tension was attributed to role overload (feeling tired and overloaded, and stressed by the total number of hours worked) and to concerns about maintaining a balance between work demands and family responsibilities. Almost two-thirds of employed parents with primary responsibility for child care reported moderate or severe tension on a daily basis due to these factors (Tables 9 and 10).

Table 9

Sources of Tension Associated With Balancing Work, Family and Child Care Responsibilities for Parents With Children Under 6, 1988

Source of Tension	Average Rating ¹	Percentage of Parents Experiencing Tension			
		No Tension (%)	Minimal Tension	Moderate Tension	Severe Tension
Role Overload:					
Feeling tired or overloaded because of your job	5.4	17.6	16.4	26.2	39.8
Total number of hours worked each week	3.7	33.2	22.0	26.4	18.5
Work-Family Interference:					
Difficulty maintaining a balance between work demands and family responsibilities	5.2	15.6	16.6	31.9	35.9
Feeling that your job/career is being hampered by family responsibilities	2.9	48.0	22.0	18.0	12.0
Schedule Incompatibility:					
Your work schedule	3.5	35.6	24.2	23.5	16.6
Child Care:					
Concerns about children's safety and well-being	3.2	42.5	23.5	19.0	15.0
Worrying that care arrangement may break down or not be available much longer	3.2	49.6	18.3	14.6	17.5
Managing the high costs of high quality child care ²	3.7	41.2	16.9	19.5	22.4
Employer Support:					
Extent to which employer/work situation is inflexible or uncaring about your role as a parent	3.2	41.6	25.3	19.0	14.2

¹ Parents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 = "no tension" and 10 = "a great deal of tension". Responses were divided into four categories: 1 = no tension; 2 and 3 = minimal tension; 4, 5 and 6 = moderate tension; 7, 8, 9 and 10 = severe tension.

² The average rating and percentages for this item are based on responses from parents who paid for child care.

The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 536,600 parents with primary responsibility for child care who worked for pay outside the home and utilized some form of non-parental child care arrangement while working. Ninety-five percent of these parents were mothers.

Table 10

Sources of Tension Associated With Balancing Work, Family and Child Care Responsibilities for Parents Whose Youngest Child is 6-12 Years, 1988

Source of Tension	Average Rating ¹	Percentage of Parents Experiencing Tension			
		No Tension	Minimal Tension	Moderate Tension	Severe Tension
(%)					
Role Overload:					
Feeling tired or overloaded because of your job	4.8	23.4	16.8	27.8	32.0
Total number of hours worked each week	3.4	40.5	20.7	22.4	16.4
Work-Family Interference:					
Difficulty maintaining a balance between work demands and family responsibilities	4.9	18.8	17.1	32.8	31.3
Feeling that your job/career is being hampered by family responsibilities	2.6	55.3	18.6	16.3	9.8
Schedule Incompatibility:					
Your work schedule	3.4	40.7	20.7	21.3	17.3
Child Care:					
Concerns about children's safety and well-being	3.7	36.2	23.4	21.0	19.3
Worrying that care arrangement may break down or not be available much longer	2.6	61.8	14.7	11.2	12.4
Managing the high costs of high quality child care ²	2.9	59.9	12.8	12.4	14.8
Employer Support:					
Extent to which employer/work situation is inflexible or uncaring about your role as a parent	3.0	49.3	20.8	14.8	15.1

¹ Parents rated each item on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 = "no tension" and 10 = "a great deal of tension". Responses were divided into four categories: 1 = no tension; 2 and 3 = minimal tension; 4, 5 and 6 = moderate tension; 7, 8, 9 and 10 = severe tension.

² The average rating and percentages for this item are based on responses from parents who paid for child care.

The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 336,700 parents with primary responsibility for child care who worked for pay outside the home and utilized some form of non-parental child care arrangement while working. Ninety-five percent of these parents were mothers.

The data indicate that parents were more concerned about the effects of work demands on their children and family life than on the extent to which family responsibilities interfere with work performance. About 30% of parents reported moderate or severe tension caused by feeling that family responsibilities were hampering their jobs or careers. In contrast, more than twice as many (66%) reported moderate or high amounts of tension related to balancing work and family commitments. It is possible that parents under-reported the extent to which family responsibilities were affecting their work performance. However, the conclusion that work-family conflict more commonly complicates or jeopardizes family life and parenting roles is consistent with the findings of other research.

The following factors contributed to moderate or severe tension for at least one-third of those questioned: parental work schedules (40% reported this factor caused moderate or severe tension); the cost of high quality child care (37% reported this factor caused moderate or severe tension); and concern about children's safety and well-being while the parent is at work (36% reported this factor caused moderate or severe tension). Furthermore, 32% of parents reported moderate or high amounts of tension caused by an inflexible or uncaring employer or work situation.

6.2 Perceptions are Related to Role Demands and Individual Circumstances

Tables 9 and 10 show the sources of work-family tension for parents with and without preschool-aged children. Both groups reported that the most significant sources of tension were feeling tired and overloaded, and having difficulty balancing work and family responsibilities.

As expected, the tension ratings of parents whose youngest child was 6 to 12 years of age were generally lower than those of parents with preschool children (under age 6). Of parents whose youngest child was under age 6, 42% of those who paid for child care reported moderate or severe amounts of tension because of the cost of high quality child care. Almost one-third (32%) of parents with children under 6 reported moderate or severe tension over the stability and continuity of their current child care arrangements. More than a quarter of parents with older children aged 6 to 12 who paid for child care experienced moderate or severe tension due to its cost; 23% of parents whose youngest child was 6-12 years worried about the stability of their care arrangements. Moderate or severe tension due to concerns about children's safety and well-being was reported by 39% of parents with school-age children, and was particularly pronounced when children spent many of their non-school hours alone or in the care of an older sibling while the parent was at work.

Parents' overall level of work-family tension and their ratings of particular elements contributing to tension varied according to a number of factors including the following: the age of the youngest child in the family, parental employment status (e.g., full- or part-time), marital status, and the types of child care used while parents were at work. A full exposition of these relationships is beyond the scope of this report; however, it is clear that work-family tension results from a variety of work and family stresses. Parents with heavy child-rearing demands, few resources, limited child care options, and minimal flexibility and/or support in the workplace are most likely to experience significant amounts of role conflict, role overload, schedule incompatibility, and work-family tension.

Our analysis of the survey data suggests that the pressures that employed parents experience are not likely to diminish unless there are significant changes in the workplace and in the availability and suitability of child care resources to support the harmonization of work and family responsibilities.



Chapter 7

FAMILY-SUPPORTIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS PREFERRED BY PARENTS WITH PRIMARY CHILD CARE RESPONSIBILITIES

National Child Care Survey interviewers asked three questions to determine the kinds of changes or workplace benefits parents would find helpful to enable them to balance work and family commitments. Two of the questions were asked of a subset of the respondent sample; the third question was asked of all employed parents with primary care responsibilities who were paid workers.

7.1 Preferred Employment Status

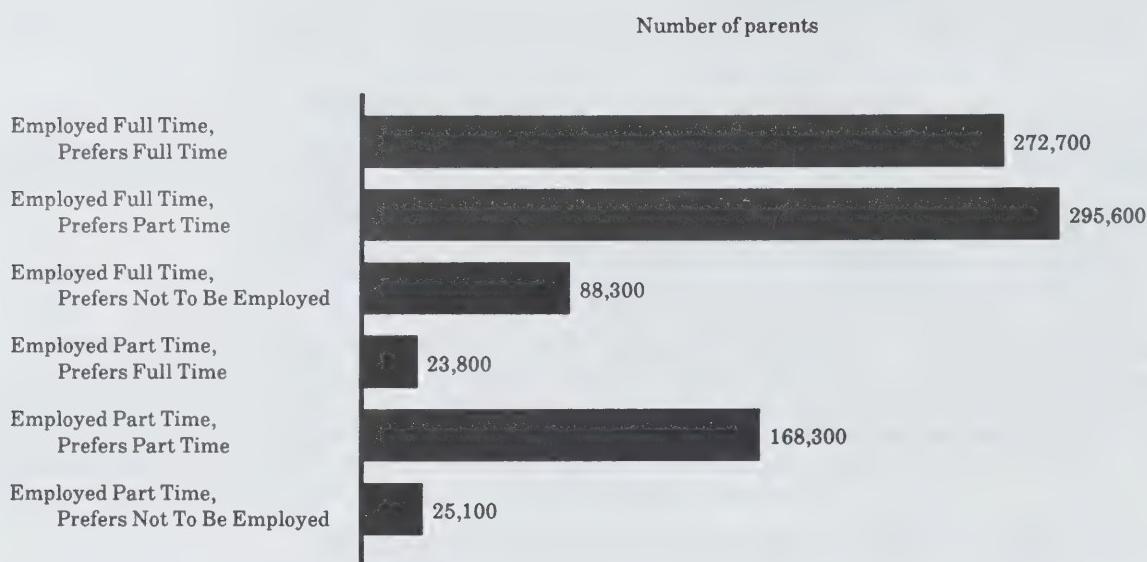
One of the ways parents may reduce the pressures involved in balancing paid work and family responsibilities is by limiting the hours they work outside the home. To determine their preferred employment status, parents in this study were asked, "When considering your own needs and those of your family, would you most prefer to work full time, part time, or not work at a job or business?" When weighted, the responses represent the opinions of an estimated 873,800 parents with primary child care responsibilities who relied on non-parental child care arrangements and who were paid workers in Canadian workplaces.²⁹

Parents who answered this question indicated a clear preference for part-time employment. Only one-third (34%) of employed parents with primary child care responsibilities indicated that full-time employment was their preferred work option, although 75% were employed on a full-time basis when surveyed. Another 53% preferred part-time employment, while 13% preferred not to be employed (Figure 9).

Of those parents who were employed full time, 42% preferred full-time work status, while 45% preferred part-time status. In contrast, of parents who were employed part time, 78% preferred part-time status, while 11% indicated a preference for full-time employment. Roughly 13% of full-time workers and 12% of part-time workers preferred not to be employed.

Figure 9

Current and Preferred Employment Status of Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities for Children Under 13, 1988



The data, when weighted, represent the responses of 873,800 parents with primary responsibility for child care for at least one child under age 13. All parents worked for pay outside the home and utilized some form of non-parental child care arrangements while working. See Note #29.

Preferred employment status did not vary greatly among those employed in the private and public sectors. However, the age of the youngest child in the family did seem to affect employment status preferences. Employed parents with children under age 3 were least likely to prefer full-time employment: only 25% of these parents said they preferred full-time work (although 71% were already employed full time). Part-time employment was preferred by at least half of employed parents with children under age 10 and by 43% of those whose youngest child was aged 10 to 12 (Table 11).

Table 11

Current and Preferred Employment Status of Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities, by Age of Youngest Child, 1988

Age of Youngest Child	Current Employment Status		Preferred Employment Status		
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Not Employed
< 3 years	71.0	29.0	25.0	58.4	16.6
3-5 years	75.7	24.3	32.9	54.1	12.9
6-9 years	76.5	23.5	40.1	50.0	9.9
10-12 years	82.2	17.8	47.3	43.0	9.7
All Parents ¹	75.1	24.9	33.9	53.1	13.0

¹ The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 873,800 parents with primary responsibility for child care who worked for pay outside the home and utilized some form of non-parental child care arrangement while working.

The majority of employed parents with primary child care responsibilities expressed a clear preference that differs considerably from their daily experience. While most parents who were employed part time preferred their work status arrangement, only a minority of parents employed full time did so. The survey results showed that 39% of parents employed full time said their employers would allow them to work part time in their present job. Theoretically, then, some parents employed full time could have reduced their work hours to part time. However, a major factor precluding this is that many parents cannot afford to do so. As growth in real family income has declined in recent years, the financial pressures on families have increased. As a result, information on parents' preferences does not indicate a propensity for most of them to change their employment status voluntarily. What it does indicate is that many parents with young children experience considerable dissonance between their lives as lived, and the kind of life they would like to have, given their values, their perceptions of their own and their family's needs, and the limited workplace flexibility and child care options many experience. This dissonance, itself, is both a reflection of, and a further contributor to parents' tension about meeting work and family obligations.

7.2 Preferred Changes to Work Schedules

Parents were also asked, "If you had a choice, would you prefer to change the schedule of hours you are working?" Schedule changes include reducing work hours or changing shifts to harmonize work schedules between parents in a dual-earner couple, or to avoid working after school, evenings, or weekends -- times when parents would prefer to be with their children.

Only parents who worked at a job or business in the week preceding the survey and who used at least one non-parental care arrangement were asked this question. Of those questioned, 39% indicated that they would like to change their current work schedules. The proportion of parents who wanted to change their work schedules was similar for those employed in the public and private sectors; it was also similar for those with younger and older children.

Parents with primary child care responsibilities were most likely to want to change the scheduling of their work hours if they worked a fixed late day shift (with hours extending regularly into the evening past 6:00 p.m.), a night shift (one ending after 10:00 p.m.), or irregular hours which varied considerably from day to day (Table 12).

Table 12

Distribution of Parents Who Prefer to Change Their Work Schedule, by Current Work Shift, 1988

Current Work Schedule	Number Employed	% Who Prefer to Change Schedules
Fixed, early day shift (ending before 4:00 p.m.)	240,100	29.5
Fixed, day shift (ending 4:00-6:00 p.m.)	329,400	38.8
Fixed, late day or night shift (ending after 6:00 p.m.)	71,100	47.7
Irregular shift	232,500	45.8
Total¹	873,200	38.8

¹ The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 873,200 parents with primary responsibility for child care who worked for pay outside the home and utilized some form of non-parental child care arrangement while working.

Parents who wished to change their work schedules were asked what changes they would make. The most popular changes, in descending order, were:

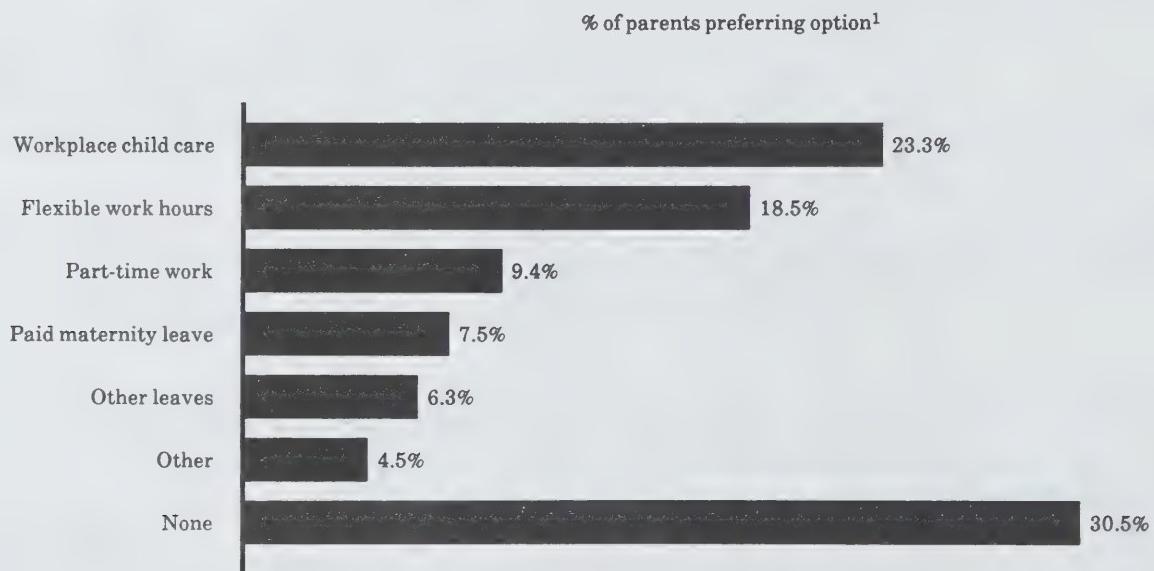
- work only during school hours,
- not work evenings,
- not work weekends,
- reduce work hours, and
- work consistent hours with no changing shifts.

7.3 Preferred Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements

Parents who were paid workers were also asked to identify one child-related benefit or arrangement that would best support them in their role as parents. The question was open-ended, allowing respondents a wide range of options. Figure 10 provides a summary of the responses.

Figure 10

Family-Supportive Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities in Families With Children Under 13, 1988



¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

Based on 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home.

Two family-supportive arrangements emerged as the most favoured: nearly one in four parents (23%) said that a workplace child care facility would best suit their needs; and almost one in five parents (19%) said that they would benefit most from flexible work hours. Other popular choices were the option to work part time (9%), paid maternity leave (8%), and other types of family leave such as short-term leaves for caring for sick children and protracted leaves for nurturing young children (6%). Five percent of parents chose other benefits including medical and dental plans and employer assistance with child care costs. Approximately 31% of parents surveyed said that no child-related benefit would assist them in their role as parents. Those who gave this response represented a rather heterogeneous group. Some were parents who already had access to their preferred work arrangement; others were parents who, for a number of reasons, felt that changes in work arrangements would not meet their needs.

7.3.1 Family Characteristics and Preferred Workplace Benefits and Arrangements

Little relationship existed between the number of children in the family and parents' preferences among specific workplace benefits and arrangement options (Table 13). Parental preferences did vary, however, by the age of children in the home (Tables 14 and 15).

Table 13

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents, by Number of Children in the Family, 1988

Preferred Workplace Benefit or Arrangement ¹	Total ² (N = 1,320,000)	1 Child < 13 (N = 671,300)	2 Children < 13 (N = 518,700)	3 or More Children < 13 (N = 129,900)
(% of parents indicating that the benefit or arrangement would best support them in their role as a parent)				
Workplace child care facility	23.3	22.7	23.3	26.3
Flexible work hours	18.5	18.1	18.9	19.1
Part-time work	9.4	9.0	10.3	7.7
Leaves:				
Paid maternity leave	7.5	8.0	7.1	6.6 ^a
Other leaves ³	6.3	6.2	6.6	5.7 ^a
Other	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.0 ^a
None	30.5	31.5	29.3	30.6

¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

² The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home. Ninety-six percent of surveyed parents responded to this question.

³ Includes emergency leave, sick child care leave, and extended child-nurturing leave.

Table 14

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents, by Presence of Preschool Children, 1988

Preferred Workplace Benefit or Arrangement ¹	All Families ² (N = 1,320,000)	With 1 or More Preschool Children	With School-Age Children Only (6-12 Years)
		(< 6 Years) (N = 701,000)	(N = 619,000)
(% of parents indicating that the benefit or arrangement would best support them in their role as a parent)			
Workplace child care facility	23.3	32.1	13.3
Flexible work hours	18.5	14.8	22.8
Part-time work	9.4	10.0	8.7
Leaves:			
Paid maternity leave	7.5	10.5	4.1
Other leaves ³	6.3	6.1	6.5
Other	4.5	4.2	4.8
None	30.5	22.3	39.8

¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

² The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home. Ninety-six percent of surveyed parents responded to this question.

³ Includes emergency leave, sick child care leave, and extended child-nurturing leave.

Table 15

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents, by Age of Youngest Child, 1988

Preferred Workplace Benefit or Arrangement ¹	Total ² (N = 1,320,000)	Age of Youngest Child				
		< 18 Months (N = 222,000)	18-35 Months (N = 183,300)	3-5 Years (N = 295,700)	6-9 Years (N = 362,500)	10-12 Years (N = 256,600)
(% of parents indicating that the benefit or arrangement would best support them in their role as a parent)						
Workplace child care facility	23.3	34.6	31.6	30.5	15.8	9.7
Flexible work hours	18.5	12.4	13.3	17.4	22.6	23.0
Part-time work	9.4	10.2	11.3	8.9	9.4	7.7
Leaves:						
Paid maternity leave	7.5	14.5	12.0	6.6	4.4	3.5 ^a
Other leaves ³	6.3	6.4	5.3	6.5	6.8	6.1
Other	4.5	3.9 ^a	4.6 ^a	4.2	5.5	3.9
None	30.5	18.0	21.8	25.9	35.4	46.0

¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

² The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home. Ninety-six percent of surveyed parents responded to this question.

³ Includes emergency leave, sick child care leave, and extended child-nurturing leave.

As expected, the preferred family-supportive benefit or workplace arrangement of parents with preschool-aged children (under age 6) was a workplace child care facility. Workplace child care offers a number of advantages for parents of very young children including the convenience and reliability of this type of care and the security of having children nearby. Workplace child care was the preferred benefit of 32% of parents with preschool-aged children under age 6 (Table 14). Parents of infants and toddlers were even more likely to prefer workplace child care: 35% of parents with children under 18 months of age favoured this idea (Table 15).

For parents with only school-aged children (aged 6 to 12) the most common preference was flexible work hours. Flexible work hours give parents time for school events and parent-teacher interviews. More control over work hours may also enable parents to synchronize work hours with the school day so they can avoid leaving their children alone early in the morning and be available when their children return from school. Access to flexible work hours was the preferred work arrangement for 23% of parents whose youngest child was 6 to 12 years old (Table 14).

The proportion of parents who indicated that no particular benefit would be of help (those responding "none") increased with the age of the youngest child in the home (Table 15). Of parents whose youngest child was aged 10 to 12, 46% said no particular child-related benefit provided by their employers would assist them; such parents indicated that their work arrangements were already satisfactory or that the introduction of family-related benefits would not make a substantial difference in their everyday lives. Of parents with a youngest child under age 3, only 18% said they would not benefit from family-supportive benefits or arrangements provided by their employers.

For parents with children under age 3, the majority (82%) indicated that specific family-supportive arrangements or benefits would help support them in their roles as parents. This is noteworthy for two reasons: first, parents with children in this age group represent a substantial proportion (almost one-third) of parents with primary responsibility for child care who work outside the home; second, parents with children under age 3 have been identified as being at high risk for experiencing significant work-family role strain, which has negative effects for themselves and their children.

Table 16 shows the preferences of single parents and of parents in two-parent families. Generally, the preferences of the two groups were similar. Flexible hours was favoured by 21% of single parents compared to 18% of parents with primary child care responsibilities in two-parent families. Single parents were less likely to prefer part-time work. Approximately 6% of single parents favoured this arrangement compared to 10% of parents who lived with a spouse or partner.

Table 16**Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents of Children Under 13, by Family Structure, 1988**

Preferred Workplace Benefit or Arrangement ¹	Total ² (N=1,320,000)	In Two-Parent Families (N=1,128,900)	In One-Parent Families (N=191,100)
(% of parents indicating that the benefit or arrangement would best support them in their role as a parent)			
Workplace child care facility	23.3	23.1	24.2
Flexible work hours	18.5	18.1	21.0
Part-time work	9.4	10.0	5.9
Leaves:			
Paid maternity leave	7.5	7.9	4.8 ^a
Other leave ³	6.3	6.1	7.5
Other	4.5	4.0	7.6
None	30.5	30.8	29.0

¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

² The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home. Ninety-six percent of surveyed parents responded to this question.

³ Includes emergency leave, sick child care leave, and extended child-nurturing leave.

7.3.2 Employment Characteristics and Preferred Workplace Benefits and Arrangements

Although employment characteristics had a considerable effect on parents' access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements, they had less effect on parents' preferences among such benefits and arrangements.

Regardless of the employment characteristics examined, workplace child care facilities and flexible work hours remained the most common family-supportive options preferred by parents.

Differences between the preferences of parents working full time and those working part time were minor, except for the proportion who said no additional family-supportive workplace benefit or arrangement would support them as parents. Approximately 39% of part-time employees indicated that no particular change in workplace arrangements would help, compared to 28% of full-time employees. Much of this difference is likely because those who preferred part-time employment were already employed part time, and hence, were already taking advantage of the option that would help them the most (Table 17). Parents working in the private sector and those working in the public sector also expressed similar preferences (Table 17).

Tables 18 and 19 show parents' preferred family-supportive work arrangement by respondents' skill levels and occupations. Analysis of these data further indicate that employment characteristics play little role in parents' preferences. Workplace child care and flexible work hours were the two most commonly preferred benefits, regardless of skill level or occupational category.

Table 17

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents of Children Under 13, by Parents' Employment Status and Employment Sector, 1988

Preferred Workplace Benefit or Arrangement ¹	Total ² (N=1,320,000)	Parents' Employment Status		Parents' Employment Sector	
		Full Time (N=967,400)	Part Time (N=352,600)	Private (N=975,700)	Public (N=344,300)
(% of parents indicating that the benefit or arrangement would best support them in their role as a parent)					
Workplace child care facility	23.3	23.6	22.4	22.1	26.7
Flexible work hours	18.5	19.3	16.4	19.3	16.3
Part-time work	9.4	10.6	6.0	8.7	11.4
Leaves:					
Paid maternity leave	7.5	7.7	7.0	7.5	7.5
Other leaves ³	6.3	6.7	5.4	5.6	8.5
Other	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.8	3.8
None	30.5	27.6	38.5	32.2	25.8

¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

² The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home. Ninety-six percent of surveyed parents responded to this question.

³ Includes emergency leave, sick child care leave, and extended child-nurturing leave.

Table 18

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents of Children Under 13, by Occupational Skill Level, 1988

Preferred Workplace Benefit or Arrangement ¹	Total ² (N=1,320,000)	Professionals (N=169,400)	Senior/ Middle Managers (N=92,900)	Semi- professionals and Technicians (N=212,200)		Supervisors (N=43,500)	Skilled Workers (N=356,100)	Semi- skilled Workers (N=255,600)	Unskilled Workers (N=190,100)
(% of parents indicating that the benefit or arrangement would best support them in their role as a parent)									
Workplace child care facility	23.3	26.0	22.6	28.7	26.3	21.3	21.3	20.7	
Flexible work hours	18.5	16.5	20.1	16.2	16.3 ^q	21.8	18.5	16.5	
Part-time work	9.4	11.0	7.8 ^q	9.8	10.7 ^q	10.5	8.3	7.2	
Leaves:									
Paid maternity leave	7.5	9.1	6.6 ^q	6.9	9.8 ^q	6.9	7.2	8.1	
Other leaves ³	6.3	9.8	6.8 ^q	9.4	...	5.1	6.6	2.1 ^q	
Other	4.5	4.3 ^q	5.6 ^q	3.3 ^q	...	3.9	5.2	5.6	
None	30.5	23.4	30.4	25.8	28.2	30.5	32.8	39.7	

¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

² The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home. Ninety-six percent of surveyed parents responded to this question. All estimates for military personnel were too small to be expressed.

³ Includes emergency leave, sick child care leave, and extended child-nurturing leave.

Table 19

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Preferred by Parents of Children Under 13, by Major Occupational Category, 1988

Occupational Category	Number	(%)	Preferred Work Arrangement ¹						
			Workplace Child Care Facility	Flexible Work Hours	Part-time Work	Paid Maternity Leave	Other Leaves ²	Other	None
(% in each occupational category who indicated that the benefit or arrangement would best support them in their role as a parent)									
Clerical	430,300	32.6	22.8	21.2	10.8	6.6	5.9	3.9	28.8
Medicine and health service	169,600	12.8	31.3	15.5	8.4	7.3	11.1	2.8 ^a	23.6
Managerial and administrative	162,200	12.3	17.0	18.0	6.1	9.0	3.6 ^a	6.3	39.9
Teaching	124,600	9.4	22.2	21.2	9.8	6.7 ^a	6.1 ^a	5.1 ^a	29.0
Processing, machining, fabricating	119,900	9.1	25.6	13.9	8.6	8.6	10.5	4.7 ^a	28.0
Sales	97,800	7.4	24.0	15.9	10.4	7.1 ^a	...	...	37.1
Sales	90,400	6.8	19.2	21.0	7.7 ^a	8.5 ^a	5.2 ^a	4.6 ^a	33.8
Total in major occupational categories listed	1,194,700	90.5							
Total in all occupations³	1,320,000	100.0							

¹ Parents were asked to provide only one response.

² Includes emergency leave, sick child care leave, and extended child-nurturing leave.

³ The data in this table, when weighted, represent the responses of 1,320,000 employed parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked for pay outside the home. Ninety-six percent of surveyed parents responded to this question.

Interestingly, parents in less-skilled categories (the semi-skilled and unskilled classifications) were more likely than other parents to respond "none" when asked which child-related benefit would best support them in their role as parents (Table 18). Similarly, parents in the three occupational categories in which unskilled workers are most heavily concentrated (sales; services; and processing, machining, and fabricating) were also more likely to respond "none" (Table 19). Since semi- and unskilled workers had comparatively less access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements than parents in other skill level categories, it seems paradoxical that these parents were less interested in family-supportive options. This relationship between parents' employment characteristics and responses of "none" can be traced to several factors. First, parents who worked in unskilled occupations and those employed in processing, machining and fabricating were more likely than other parents to have a youngest child between 10 and 12 years of age. Parents of older children tend to be less concerned with such benefits as extended maternity leaves and workplace child care facilities than parents of younger children. As a result, these parents may not feel that changes in the workplace would greatly contribute to their ability to manage work and family responsibilities.

Second, parents employed in sales and service occupations were significantly more likely to be employed only part time, and to work non-standard hours (either a fixed evening or night shift or an irregular schedule). Similarly, parents whose jobs were classified as unskilled were also more likely

to work non-standard hours. Such parents may not have stated a preference among family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements because they were already taking advantage of the options most helpful to them in their role as parents -- ones that allowed them reduced hours and work schedules that allowed them to off-shift with a spouse or partner.

Third, parents who hold low-skill (often poor-paying) jobs may simply not appreciate how changes in family-supportive workplace policies might benefit them. In all likelihood, these parents are more concerned about such basic issues as the adequacy of their wages, job security, and obtaining access to basic benefits, such as paid sick leave and health plans.

7.4 Summary

Approximately half of parents with primary responsibility for child care indicated that they would prefer to change their employment status (often changing from full time to part time); almost 40% would prefer to change their current work schedules; and nearly 70% said that a change in workplace policy or practices would help them in their role as parents.

Employment characteristics appear to have little or no relationship to parents' preferences for work schedule or work status changes, or to parents' preferences among various family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements. These preferences appear to be dictated, instead, by family characteristics, especially the age of the youngest child in the home. The two most frequently cited preferences were workplace child care and flexibility in work hours. These preferences reflect the responses of two groups of parents: parents with preschool-aged children (under age 6), who were more likely to prefer workplace child care facilities; and parents whose youngest child was school-aged (aged 6 to 12), who were more likely to prefer flexible work hours.



Chapter 8

CONCLUSIONS

Demographic and social changes over the past few decades have radically altered the characteristics of the Canadian work force. As women continue to enter the labour force in record numbers, the proportion of employees from dual-earner and single-parent families continues to rise. In addition, budgetary constraints, corporate restructuring, and extensive layoffs in the early 1990s have resulted in employers increasingly relying on a smaller number of employees. Consequently, workplace changes that can help workers deal with the stress of balancing their work and family responsibilities have become increasingly important to both employees and employers.

Past surveys of corporate executives, however, suggest that most employers have been slow to respond to employees' family needs. The reluctance of employers to initiate family-supportive policies, combined with employees' reluctance to ask for them, have perpetuated the common perception of work and family as "separate spheres". Acceptance of this view has had two significant effects: first, issues concerning parents' ability to manage the competing demands of work and family life remain unaddressed. Second, work-family conflict continues to be defined as the problem of individual employees, rather than as a systemic workplace and societal problem related to productivity in general, and to the need for adequate community support.

Public policy makers are beginning to address workplace policies as a means of ameliorating some of the stresses parents experience, and to ensure employment equity for workers with dependent family members. However, neither governments nor corporate managers can begin to determine what responses are needed in the workplace without knowing what employees need, and to what degree they have access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements.

The data presented in this report allow us to take at least the first steps in recognizing the needs and concerns of Canada's working parents. Data from the National Child Care Survey represent the nearly 1.4 million parents who were paid workers outside the home in 1988 while retaining primary responsibility in their family for arranging child care for children under 13 years of age. Over half of such parents surveyed (53%, representing approximately 730,000 families) had children under age 6, while nearly one-third (31%, representing 424,000 families) had children under age 3. Employed parents of very young children can find it particularly challenging to strike a balance between family responsibilities and the demands of the workplace. In addition to finding affordable care, these parents may be especially concerned about the quality of care their children are receiving and may experience problems unique to parents of young children, such as anxieties over being separated and frequent childhood illnesses. Parents with kindergarten-age children experience similar problems, as well as those that stem from having to piece together two or more part-time arrangements to cover parents' full-time work schedules.

Of parents with primary child care responsibilities who worked outside the home, 47% (representing 639,000 families) had a youngest child who was of school age (aged 6 to 12). The family responsibilities encountered by these

parents differ substantially from the needs of parents with younger children. Parents of school-aged children may be particularly concerned about their children's well-being before and after school, especially if their children are unsupervised or in a sibling's care. They may need to coordinate multiple child care arrangements and "back-up" arrangements for school and other holidays. In addition, such parents may need to work out transportation logistics around their children's school schedules and after-school activities. They may also face additional school-related commitments such as parent-teacher interviews and volunteer work.

Essentially parents comprised two groups whose needs were clearly tied to the age of their children: parents of preschool-aged children (under 6) and parents of school-aged children (aged 6 to 12). The distinction between these two groups was particularly evident in parental preferences among specific family-supportive workplace options. Parents with preschool-aged children, especially those with very young children, consistently preferred workplace child care; parents whose youngest child was of school age consistently favoured increased flexibility in work hours. In addition, parents of preschool-aged children were more likely than parents of school-aged children to prefer part-time work. Employment characteristics were significantly less important in determining parental preferences among family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements than were family characteristics. Clearly, parents' needs change as their children age.

No relationship existed between the nature and strength of child-rearing demands parents are faced with and their access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements. However, patterns suggest systemic inequities related to parents' employment sectors and occupations. Access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements was more common among employees who were more highly skilled and those in the public sector. These inequities, combined with employers' lack of awareness and responsiveness to employees' child care needs, place a considerable burden on many working parents.

Parents and their children would benefit if employers and policy makers recognized the importance of more flexible workplace policies and more affordable, high-quality child care options as factors that are essential for parents who must balance work and family responsibilities. Work-family conflict has serious repercussions, not only for parents and their children, but also for employers and co-workers as stress takes its toll on workers' health, morale, and productivity. If the imbalance between parents' needs for flexibility and support and their access to family-supportive workplace benefits and arrangements is to be corrected, policy makers and employers must increase their sensitivity to the needs of parents with younger and older children and facilitate the harmonization of work and family responsibilities for both mothers and fathers.

It appears that no single benefit or work arrangement will meet the needs of all working parents. Instead, effective solutions to easing the conflict between work and family responsibilities will require a variety of approaches in the workplace, as well as renewed efforts to ensure the availability of a range of high quality child care options.

As noted by Margie Mayfield in her study of workplace child care:

An effective approach to the integration of work and family responsibilities would appear to encompass "multiple solutions to multiple problems..."³⁰

At the heart of such efforts is the development of a collective sense of responsibility among employers, parents, taxpayers, and policy makers for programs and initiatives that equitably support the needs of children and families in our society.

ENDNOTES

1. The parent referred to as having primary responsibility for arranging child care was self-identified at the time of the National Child Care Survey interview. When parents in two-parent families shared that responsibility equally, the mother was interviewed and considered to be primarily responsible for child care arrangements. This parent may be referred to as the Interviewed Parent (IP) or Designated Adult (DA) in other reports based on the National Child Care Survey.
2. Statistics Canada (1993). **The labour force**. December, 1992. Catalogue No. 71-001, p. A-5.
3. Statistics Canada (1989). **Labour force annual averages, 1981-1988**. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services. Catalogue No. 71-529, Table 1; Statistics Canada (1992). **Labour force annual averages, 1991**. Ottawa: Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. Catalogue No. 71-220, Table 1.
4. Statistics Canada (1989). **Labour force annual averages, 1981-1988**. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services. Catalogue No. 71-529, Table 8; Statistics Canada (1992). **Labour force annual averages, 1991**. Ottawa: Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. Catalogue No. 71-220, Table 8.
5. The effects of these pervasive demographic changes on the composition of Canada's work force appear to have overridden the short-term effects of the economic downturn in the early 1990s. Many employers remain concerned about the shrinking entry-level labour pool, and continue to experience difficulty hiring in key areas (Towers Perrin & Hudson Institute, 1991).
6. Statistics Canada (1991). **Characteristics of dual-earner families, 1990**. Ottawa: Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. Catalogue No. 13-215, p. 8.
7. Statistics Canada (1990). **Women in Canada: A statistical report**. Catalogue No. 89-503E, Table 1, p. 78; Statistics Canada (1992). **Labour force annual averages, 1991**. Catalogue No. 71-220, Table 8.
8. Statistics Canada (1990). **Women in Canada: A statistical report**. Catalogue No. 89-503E, Table 4, p. 80; Statistics Canada (1992). **Labour force annual averages, 1991**. Catalogue No. 71-220, Table 8.
9. Lero, D.S., Goelman, H., Pence, A.R., Brockman, L.M. & Nuttall, S. (1992). **Parental work patterns and child care needs**. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue No. 89-529E.
10. *ibid.*
11. Labour Canada, Bureau of Labour Information, special tabulation, July, 1992.
12. Government of Canada (1989). **Integration of work and family responsibilities: Report on strategies submitted by Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women to the annual conference of First Ministers, Nov. 9-10, 1989**. Ottawa: Queen's Printer.

13. In December, 1992, legislation was introduced to reduce Unemployment Insurance benefits from 60% of insurable earnings to 57%, up to an annually adjusted maximum amount.
14. Labour Canada. **Employment standards legislation in Canada, 1991.** Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1991, p. 81.
15. In fact, data from two independent American studies showed considerable discrepancy between findings based on employers' reports and those based on employees. Both authors used extremely large, nationally representative datasets and investigated (among other benefits) the availability of flexible hours. The employee survey found that approximately 12% of U.S. wage and salary workers reported flexible hours (Mellor, 1986). The survey of employers, however, (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 1988, January) suggested that 44% of U.S. organizations offered flextime.
16. The population coverage of the National Child Care Survey was tied to that of the Labour Force Survey. As a result, the sample did not include families living in the Yukon or Northwest Territories, families living on Indian reserves, or families who were living outside of Canada at the time of the survey.
17. The exclusion of these groups of parents in no way suggests that parents who are unpaid family workers, or who are self-employed or work at home do not have as many demands on their time and energy as other parents. Indeed, these parents encounter the same challenges as any parent in the labour force, challenges which may be exacerbated if working at home leads to a sense of isolation or forces a parent to divide his or her attention between children and business. However, the unique needs of such families were considered to be beyond the scope of a report on workplace benefits. For complete information on parental work status in Canadian families with children under 13, readers are referred to Lero, Goelman, Pence, Brockman & Nuttall (1992), **Parental work patterns and child care needs.**
18. All information was provided by the interviewed parent; therefore, data on workplace benefits available to parents without primary responsibility for child care are as reported by their spouse or partner.
19. Comparable data on the availability of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements (to all parents with children under 13 in Canada, including parents with primary child care responsibilities and those without) are provided in Appendix B.
20. Questionnaire items on maternity leave referred to general workplace policy, rather than to the individual employee's access to the benefit.
21. These data were collected before amendments were made in 1990 to the federal Unemployment Insurance Act. Prior to the amendments, maternity benefits were provided for 17 weeks with a mandatory two-week waiting period. Most provinces legislated their leave entitlements to cover similar time periods. For more information on Canadian statutory requirements on parental leave, including an update on the new federal regulations, see Lero, D.S. & Johnson, K.L. (in preparation), **110 Canadian statistics on work and family.**

22. For example, flextime is often structured around "core hours" during which all employees must be on the job. Employees' room to manoeuvre around these preset hours can vary, ranging from day-to-day flexibility to the requirement that employees submit work schedules months in advance. Not uncommonly, workers who opt to begin their work day earlier or later still have fixed beginning and ending times.
 23. Tables 3 and 4 suggest a relationship between parents' child-rearing demands and the proportion of parents reporting the availability of maternity leave options. The data shown indicate that parents with only older children were less likely to have access to maternity leave and Unemployment Insurance top-up benefits than parents of younger children; however, further analysis revealed that parents of older children were less likely to know whether such benefits were available. Evidently, as parents no longer required these benefits, they were less likely to know of their existence.
 24. The increased tendency for parents with larger or younger families to accept only part-time work is supported by research cited by Duffy & Pupo (1992).
 25. Pay Research Bureau (1989a). **Benefits and working conditions in the Public Service of Canada.** Ottawa: Public Service Staff Relations Board; M. Townson and Associates (1989). **Leave for employees with family responsibilities.** Ottawa: Labour Canada.
 26. Certainly, not all of the occupations in these categories are classified as semi-skilled or unskilled. For example, the "sales" category includes insurance and real estate salespersons, but the vast majority of parents in this category were classified as sales clerks (63%).
 27. Freidman, D. (1991). **Linking work-family issues to the bottom line.** New York: The Conference Board, Report No. 962, p. 16.
 28. "No tension" is based on a rating of 1; "minimal tension" refers to a rating of 2 or 3; "moderate tension" was inferred from ratings of 4, 5, or 6; and "severe tension" was based on a rating of 7, 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale.
 29. All data summarized in Sections 7.1 and 7.2 are based on those parents who responded to the questions about preferred employment status and preferred work schedules. Preferences were unavailable or not stated for 190,000 parents. Non-responders were similar to responders in employment status (full or part time), employment sector (public or private), and work shift. The major difference between the two groups was that non-responders were considerably more likely to have only older school-age children at home. About 45% of non-responders' youngest children were 10-12 years old, and only 27% of this group had a child under age 6. In contrast, 62% of responders had a child under age 6; only 13% had a youngest child 10-12 years old. These differences are likely to have resulted in some over-estimation in the percentage of parents who would prefer to work part time or not work for pay outside the home.
 30. Mayfield, Margie. (1989). **Work-related child care in Canada.** Ottawa: Labour Canada.
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APPENDICES

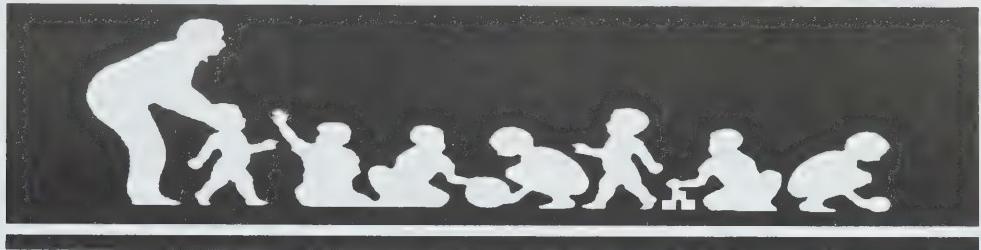
APPENDIX A

Questions Asked to Determine the Availability of Workplace Benefits and Flexibility and Parents' Preferences Among Workplace Options

- A16. Jobs differ in how much support and flexibility they give working parents. Thinking about your (main) job:
- a. Are there facilities available for the care of children at your place of work?
 - b. Are these facilities available for children:
 - under the age of 2 years?
 - from 2-5 years?
 - from 6-12 years?
 - c. Can these facilities be used on an occasional or short term basis?
 - d. Can you bring your child(ren) to work with you on a regular basis?
 - e. Can you be flexible in the hours you work?
 - f. Can you take paid leave, other than your own sick days or vacation leave, if your child(ren) is(are) ill, or if your regular child care arrangement breaks down?
 - g. Would your employer allow you the option of working part time in your present job?
 - h. Would your employer allow you the option of sharing your job with someone else?
 - i. The Unemployment Insurance Program generally provides 60% of a person's salary as a maternity benefit for 15 weeks. Does your employer provide any additional pay during these 15 weeks?
 - j. Will your employer hold a job for longer than 15 weeks for a person on maternity leave?
 - k. Does your employer provide pay (partial or full) for any of these additional weeks?

- A17. What one child-related benefit would you most like your employer to provide to support you in your role as a parent?
- P7. When considering your own needs and those of your family, would you most prefer to work full time, to work part time, or not work at a job or business?
- P8. If you had a choice, would you prefer to change the schedule of hours you are currently working?
- P9. What changes would you make?
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APPENDIX B

Note regarding Appendix Tables B-1 to B-9 inclusive:

Information about the availability of family-supportive benefits and work arrangements for both parents (if there were two) was provided by the parent who was primarily responsible for child care. Those without primary responsibility for child care were not directly interviewed.

Table B-1

Selected Demographic Characteristics of Employed Parents With Children Under 13, 1988

Characteristics	All Employed Parents ¹		Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities ²		Parents Without Primary Child Care Responsibilities ³	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Gender						
Male	1,783,800	56.9	82,100	6.0	1,701,700	96.3
Female	1,352,200	43.1	1,287,100	94.0	65,200	3.7
Age						
15-24 years	135,500	4.3	78,700	5.7	56,800	3.2
25-29 years	561,100	17.9	278,700	20.4	282,400	16.0
30-34 years	909,100	29.0	419,000	30.6	490,100	27.7
35-39 years	846,200	27.0	370,800	27.1	475,400	26.9
40-44 years	489,800	15.6	174,300	12.7	315,500	17.9
45-59 years	194,400	6.2	47,700	3.5	146,700	8.3
Highest Educational Level Completed						
Less than 8th grade	180,000	5.7	59,000	4.3	121,000	6.8
9th-11th grade	681,100	21.7	268,800	19.6	412,300	23.3
Grade 12 or 13; no post-secondary	831,500	26.5	398,900	29.1	432,600	24.5
Some post-secondary	298,900	9.5	128,900	9.4	170,000	9.6
Post-secondary certificate or diploma	593,500	18.9	288,500	21.1	305,000	17.3
University degree	551,000	17.6	225,000	16.4	326,000	18.5
Total	3,136,000	100.0	1,369,100	100.0	1,766,900	100.0

¹ Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

² Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

³ Data for parents without primary child care responsibilities were provided by their spouse or partner.

Table B-2

Selected Employment Characteristics of Employed Parents With Children Under 13, 1988

Characteristics	All Parents ¹		Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities ²		Parents Without Primary Child Care Responsibilities ³	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Employment status						
Full time	2,748,000	87.6	1,004,000	73.3	1,744,000	98.7
Part time	388,000	12.4	365,100	26.7	22,900	1.3
Employment sector						
Private	2,393,300	76.3	1,013,100	74.0	1,380,200	78.1
Public	742,800	23.7	356,000	26.0	386,700	21.9
Occupational category						
Managerial, administrative	421,200	13.4	129,700	9.5	291,500	16.5
Natural science, engineering, mathematics	146,900	4.7	22,700	1.7	124,200	7.0
Social science	51,200	1.6	33,700	2.5	17,500	1.0
Religion	7,500 ^a	0.2 ^a	...	...	6,300 ^a	0.4 ^a
Teaching	202,300	6.5	123,900	9.1	78,400	4.4
Medicine	197,300	6.3	173,400	12.7	23,900	1.4
Artistic	30,600	1.0	14,800	1.1	15,800	0.9
Clerical	560,700	17.9	443,900	32.4	116,700	6.6
Sales	199,600	6.4	94,700	6.9	104,900	5.9
Service	278,900	8.9	168,200	12.3	110,600	6.3
Primary occupations	75,600	2.4	11,000	0.8	64,700	3.7
Processing, machining, fabricating	510,900	16.3	101,900	7.4	409,000	23.1
Construction, transportation	434,700	13.9	49,600	3.6	385,100	21.8
Military	18,700	0.6	...	...	18,400	1.0
Total	3,136,000	100.0	1,369,100	100.0	1,766,900	100.0

¹ Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

² Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

³ Data for parents without primary child care responsibilities were provided by their spouse or partner.

Table B-3

Availability of Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements to Employed Parents¹ of Children Under 13, by Caregiver Status and Sex, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Response	Women				Men		
		Total (N=1,352,200)	With Primary Child Care Responsibilities ² (N=1,287,100)	Without Primary Child Care Responsibilities ³ (N=65,200)	Total (N=1,783,800)	With Primary Child Care Responsibilities ² (N=82,100)	Without Primary Child Care Responsibilities ³ (N=1,701,700)	
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement was available in their workplace)								
Reduced hours:								
Part-time work	Yes	53.6	54.7	31.5	11.5	23.5	10.9	
	No	39.1	38.3	53.5	76.7	59.2	77.6	
	Don't Know	7.3	6.9	15.0	11.8	17.2	11.6	
Job-sharing	Yes	24.1	24.7	12.3 ^a	7.7	14.2	7.4	
	No	60.2	59.8	66.6	76.9	65.6	77.5	
	Don't Know	15.7	15.4	21.1	15.3	20.2	15.1	
Flexible work hours	Yes	31.9	32.5	19.5	20.7	26.7	20.4	
	No	64.5	64.2	71.6	74.7	60.0	75.4	
	Don't Know	3.6	3.3	8.9 ^a	4.6	13.3	4.2	
Paid leave for family reasons ⁴	Yes	23.0	23.4	14.8	20.8	23.4	20.7	
	No	70.0	69.9	72.5	67.5	59.0	67.9	
	Don't Know	7.0	6.7	12.8 ^a	11.7	17.6	11.4	
Maternity leave:								
UI top-up	Yes	12.4	12.4	11.8 ^a	6.6	11.1	6.4	
	No	63.7	64.0	56.6	51.5	43.9	51.9	
	Don't Know	23.9	23.5	31.6	41.9	45.0	41.8	
Extended maternity leave ⁵	Yes	53.1	54.0	35.8	24.2	39.2	23.4	
	No	17.9	17.9	18.5	25.4	14.3	25.9	
	Don't Know	29.0	28.1	45.8	50.4	46.6	50.6	
Workplace child care facility	Yes	5.9	6.0	...	2.8	5.1 ^a	2.7	
	No	90.8	91.1	85.3	92.8	80.8	93.4	
	Don't Know	3.3	2.9	10.1 ^a	4.4	14.1	3.9	
Can bring child to work	Yes	4.5	4.7	...	1.8	...	1.7	
	No	92.3	92.5	89.2	94.4	82.8	95.0	
	Don't Know	3.1	2.9	8.6 ^a	3.7	14.1	3.2	

¹ Excludes parents who worked at home, were self-employed or were unpaid family workers.

² Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13.

³ Data for parents without primary child care responsibilities were provided by their spouse or partner.

⁴ Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

⁵ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

Table B-4

Availability of Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements to Parents of Children Under 13, by Parents' Employment Status, 1988

Employment Status	Reduced Hours			Maternity Leave				
	Part-time Work	Job-sharing	Flexible Work Hours	Paid Leave For Family Reasons ¹	UI Top-Up	Extended Maternity Leave ²	Workplace Child Care	Can Bring Child to Work
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement was available in their workplace)								
All Parents ³ (N = 3,136,000)	29.6	14.8	25.5	21.7	9.1	36.7	4.1	3.0
Full time (N = 2,748,000)	19.7	14.1	26.2	26.3	10.7	40.6	4.5	2.8
Part time (N = 388,000)	100.0	17.2	23.5	7.2	4.0	24.1	3.0	3.7
Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities⁴ (N = 1,369,100)								
Full time (N = 1,004,000)	52.9	24.1	32.2	23.4	12.4	53.1	5.9	4.6
Part time (N = 365,100)	100.0	33.7	46.2	14.3	7.9	47.3	5.8	7.3
Parents Without Primary Child Care Responsibilities⁵ (N = 1,766,900)								
Full time (N = 1,744,000)	11.6	7.6	20.4	20.5	6.6	23.9	2.7	1.8
Part time (N = 22,900)	10.5	7.4	20.3	20.7	6.6	23.8	2.7	1.8
	100.0	20.9 ^a	27.2 ^a	...	...	27.3 ^a	...	...

¹ Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

² Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

³ Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

⁴ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

⁵ Data for parents without primary child care responsibilities were provided by their spouse or partner.

Table B-5

Availability of Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements to Parents With Children Under 13, by Parents' Employment Sector, 1988

Employment Sector	Reduced Hours				Maternity Leave				Workplace Child Care	Can Bring Child to Work
	Part-time Work	Job-sharing	Flexible Work Hours	Paid Leave For Family Reasons ¹	UI Top-Up	Extended Maternity Leave ²				
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement was available in their workplace)										
All Parents ³ (N=3,136,000)	29.6	14.8	25.5	21.7	9.1	36.7			4.1	3.0
Private (N=2,393,300)	28.6	13.3	26.6	18.9	6.6	31.9			3.1	3.0
Public (N=742,800)	32.8	19.7	22.0	30.8	17.1	52.1			7.6	3.0
Parents With Primary Child Care Responsibilities ⁴ (N=1,369,100)	52.9	24.1	32.2	23.4	12.4	53.1			5.9	4.6
Private (N=1,013,100)	53.0	22.3	34.9	20.3	9.1	48.1			4.6	4.9
Public (N=356,000)	52.6	29.4	24.3	32.1	21.7	67.4			9.9	3.7
Parents Without Primary Child Care Responsibilities ⁵ (N=1,776,900)	11.6	7.6	20.4	20.5	6.6	23.9			2.7	1.8
Private (N=1,380,200)	10.8	6.7	20.5	17.9	4.8	20.0			1.9	1.6
Public (N=386,700)	14.6	10.7	20.0	29.7	12.9	37.9			5.6	2.4 ^a

¹ Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

² Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

³ Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

⁴ Parents designated as having primary responsibility for making child care arrangements in families with at least one child under 13. Ninety-four percent of these parents were mothers.

⁵ Data for parents without primary child care responsibilities were provided by their spouse or partner.

Table B-6

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents of Children Under 13 With Primary Child Care Responsibilities, by Occupational Skill Level, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Total ¹ (N = 1,369,100)	Professionals (N = 177,100)	Senior/Middle Managers (N = 97,000)	Semi-professionals and Technicians (N = 217,400)	Supervisors (N = 46,700)	Skilled Workers (N = 369,800)	Semi-skilled Workers (N = 264,400)	Unskilled Workers (N = 196,500)	Military (N = ...)
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement was available in their workplace)									
Reduced hours:									
Part-time work	52.9	53.9	31.2	71.0	43.7	47.3	59.1	47.0	...
Job-sharing	24.1	36.6	21.6	30.6	16.8 ^q	22.4	20.0	17.5	...
Flexible work hours	32.2	21.6	43.4	30.4	27.1	37.5	33.6	27.5	...
Paid leave for family reasons ²	23.4	28.6	41.4	18.8	24.0	29.0	18.8	10.3	...
Maternity leave:									
UI top-up	12.4	15.7	18.0	18.7	7.9 ^q	12.0	9.6	5.0	...
Extended maternity leave ³	53.1	69.3	61.5	67.6	45.8	50.5	45.7	35.0	...
Workplace child care facility	5.9	12.6	9.3	9.0	...	3.5	4.6	...	...
Can bring child to work	4.6	4.9 ^q	6.7 ^q	1.8 ^q	...	4.7	5.8	4.1 ^q	...

¹ Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

Table B-7

Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to Parents of Children Under 13 Without Primary Child Care Responsibilities, by Occupational Skill Level, 1988

Workplace Benefit or Arrangement	Total ¹ (N = 1,766,900)	Professionals (N = 201,500)	Senior/Middle Managers (N = 245,200)	Semi-professionals and Technicians (N = 105,700)	Supervisors (N = 98,900)	Skilled Workers (N = 363,300)	Semi-skilled Workers (N = 323,100)	Unskilled Workers (N = 411,000)	Military (N = 18,400)
(% of parents reporting benefit or arrangement was available in their workplace)									
Reduced hours:									
Part-time work	11.6	18.5	8.5	13.3	9.0 ^q	10.9	12.4	10.9	...
Job-sharing	7.6	14.9	6.2	9.5	5.3	7.0	6.4	6.7	...
Flexible work hours	20.4	29.5	34.7	26.0	19.5	21.2	13.9	10.9	...
Paid leave for family reasons ²	20.5	29.1	33.7	27.3	21.3	19.0	14.3	11.7	41.8
Maternity leave:									
UI top-up	6.6	10.9	8.8	11.0	5.6 ^q	6.9	4.4	3.6	...
Extended maternity leave ³	23.9	40.9	29.7	33.1	26.2	22.1	17.6	15.7	25.2 ^q
Workplace child care facility	2.7	8.9	3.5 ^q	6.3 ^q	...	1.4 ^q	...	1.1 ^q	...
Can bring child to work	1.8	3.9 ^q	2.6 ^q	...	...	...	...	1.8 ^q	...

¹ Data for parents without primary child care responsibilities were provided by their spouse or partner. Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

Table B-8

**Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to
Parents of Children Under 13 With Primary Child Care Responsibilities,
by Major Occupational Category, 1988**

Occupational Category	Number	(%)	Workplace Benefit or Arrangement								Can Bring Child to Work
			Part-time Work	Job-sharing	Flexible Work Hours	Paid Leave for Family Reasons ¹	UI Top-Up	Extended Maternity Leave ²	Workplace Child Care		
(% of parents in each occupational category reporting benefit or arrangement was available in their workplace)											
Clerical	443,900	32.4	49.1	20.3	34.3	30.4	13.6	53.3	3.8	3.7	
Medicine and health	173,400	12.7	74.4	33.2	28.9	17.7	19.6	71.4	8.2	...	
Service	168,200	12.3	70.5	26.2	36.4	12.5	5.0 ^a	36.2	5.8	8.8	
Managerial and administrative	129,700	9.5	32.2	19.4	41.2	38.6	16.2	61.9	7.7	5.4 ^a	
Teaching	123,900	9.1	66.6	44.4	11.2	24.9	13.9	68.7	15.5	6.0 ^a	
Processing, machining, fabricating	101,900	7.4	19.2	9.5	17.3	10.4	5.1 ^a	40.6	...	...
Sales	94,700	6.9	62.4	24.1	50.5	13.0	4.6 ^a	39.7	...	5.1 ^a	
Total in major occupational categories listed	1,235,800	90.3									
Total in all occupations³	1,369,100	100.0									

¹ Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

² Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

³ Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

Table B-9

**Family-Supportive Benefits and Work Arrangements Available to
Parents of Children Under 13 Without Primary Child Care
Responsibilities¹, by Major Occupational Category, 1988**

Occupational Category	Number	(%)	Workplace Benefit or Arrangement								
			Part-time Work	Job-sharing	Flexible Work Hours	Paid Leave for Family Reasons ²	UI Top-Up	Extended Maternity Leave ³	Workplace Child Care	Can Bring Child to Work	
(% of parents in each occupational category reporting benefit or arrangement was available in their workplace)											
Processing, machining, fabricating	409,000	23.1	6.7	5.0	10.6	11.9	4.6	17.8	...	...
Construction, transportation	385,100	21.8	10.5	6.2	13.0	13.2	4.0	14.8	...	1.5 ^a	
Managerial and administrative	291,500	16.5	8.2	5.9	34.4	33.8	8.8	30.8	3.2 ^a	2.2 ^a	
Natural science, engineering, mathematics	124,200	7.0	6.1 ^a	3.8 ^a	32.0	28.9	8.9	30.6	4.1 ^a	...	
Clerical	116,700	6.6	14.5	5.5 ^a	19.7	23.4	9.8	33.9	...	...
Service	110,600	6.3	17.1	8.3 ^a	18.7	20.9	6.6 ^a	24.8	3.7 ^a	...	
Sales	104,900	5.9	17.8	10.5	37.3	22.6	4.4 ^a	20.3	...	...
Teaching	78,400	4.4	35.0	32.6	16.4	25.1	13.2	53.7	17.7	6.5 ^a	
Total in major occupational categories listed	1,620,400	91.7									
Total in all occupations⁴	1,766,900	100.0									

¹ Data for parents without primary child care responsibilities were provided by their spouse or partner.

² Short-term leaves of several hours or days when children are sick or when regular child care arrangements fall through.

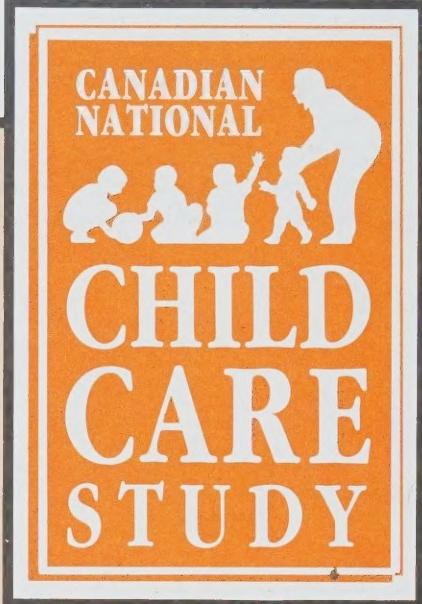
³ Includes both paid and unpaid leaves.

⁴ Does not include parents who worked at home, were self-employed, or were unpaid family workers.

The Canadian National Child Care Study

is a collaborative research project among four members of the National Day Care Research Network, Statistics Canada, and Human Resources Development.

It was designed to provide comprehensive and reliable information about



Canadian families and their child care arrangements, parental work patterns, and factors that affect families as they strive to maintain their family's economic well-being and meet the needs of their children.

Major research reports based on the study can be ordered directly from Statistics Canada.



Introductory Report

Where are the children? An overview of child care arrangements in Canada
Where are the children? An analysis of child care arrangements used while parents work or study

Parental work patterns and child care needs

Work place benefits and flexibility: A perspective on parents' experiences

Patterns of child care in one-and two-parent families

Canadian child care in context: Perspectives from the Provinces and Territories



Additional research reports are being planned that will address:

- Infant Care
- Care for School-Age Children
- Family Day Care Arrangements
- Urban and Rural Families
- Immigrant Families and Their Child Care Arrangements
- Children with Special Needs
- Work, Family and Child Care
- Affordability and Availability of Child Care Alternatives
- Perceived Effects of Child Care Experiences on Children and Their Parents
- Inter-Provincial Differences in Child Care Use Patterns

Researchers can obtain a copy of the public use microdata tape of the National Child Care Survey and a copy of the Microdata Users' Guide by contacting the Special Surveys Group, Household Surveys Division of Statistics Canada.

